These 70 Years

An Autobiography

Thomas Lewis

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THESE SEVENTY YEARS

Thomas Lewis

SECOND EDITION

These Seventy Years

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY

THOMAS LEWIS
Missionary in Cameroons and Congo
1883 - 1923

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ROBERT E. CLOUD

TO THE MEMORY OF
MY FATHER,
WHOSE SACRIFICES MADE
IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO BECOME
A MISSIONARY,
THIS BOOK
IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED

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PREFACE

By W. Y. Fullerton, D.D.

The prevailing characteristic of this book is its intimacy. Thomas Lewis not only had a remarkable and varied experience, he had the faculty of recovering the impressions of the past, and could write of things long distant as if they happened only yesterday. Hence we have here a volume of living narrative, vibrant with feeling. He lives his life over again, and carries us along with him, giving us not only results but showing the processes that led to them.

He shares with us his early struggles in Wales, opens his heart as he prepares for his great venture, is not content merely to report that he arrived in Africa, but takes us as fellow-travellers on the voyage. Then in panoramic pictures he recalls his apprentice years in the Cameroons, with their abrupt ending; moves on to San Salvador, and gives an interior view of the founding of the Congo Church; to Zombo, with its long trial of patience; and to Kimpese, with its intensive efforts. Finally, we come back to London and to Wales. It is a fascinating story.

The interest of any story lies in its details, and Mr. Lewis gives them amply. He is not content to tell us that the Germans annexed the Cameroons, he shows us how it was done, and lets us hear the whizz of the bullets: not content to remind us that in the early days the missionaries sickened and died, he makes us feel something of the heroic sorrow of the time; not content to register the harvest of souls, he takes us down to the river for their baptism and almost makes us sharers in their first Communion.

The chapter entitled "The King's Necklace" is classic. It was written long ago, and has been reproduced and amplified for this book. In picturesque phrase it helps us to understand something of the travesty of justice in the olden days in Congo. Sir Harry Johnston, who saw the earlier manuscript,

pronounced it as probably the only authentic description of a system that "almost reduced justice in those days—in civil cases, at any rate—to an operatic farce, pleadings, defence and examination all treated rhythmically, poetically, and sung with or without an accompaniment of music."

Scarcely was the story written before the hand that held the pen was still for ever. Mr. Lewis saw the proof sheets of the book, but that was all, and a few days afterwards he passed over, his course finished, and his memory cherished by all who knew him as that of a brave, tender, stalwart comrade and friend. With his head on the shoulder of his colleague, Robert Glennie, he bade us good-bye for a little while on December the fifth, and his body was laid to rest in the great God's Acre at New Southgate.

Sixteen months earlier he had spoken some tender words at the funeral of his friend, Lawson Forfeitt. They revealed the man, and may now express the tribute many others would render to him also.

"When we had gathered together the carriers for Evening Worship," he said, "how we all enjoyed the sacred melodies sung by those dusky brethren of ours, their voices sounding very strange in the rough country of forests and wild beasts. Then the lads came up one by one to say their 'Good night.' You know how we loved to hear those beautiful African salutations. In the evening it was 'Sala leka kiambote, Mfumu'—'Sleep well, my master'—while in the morning they approached us with the companion greeting—'Have you slept well?' Those were happy days, perhaps all the happier because at that time length of days was not regarded as of much consequence in Congoland.

"You and I have journeyed long. We have been led by different paths, for we have not always travelled in company. But by God's grace we have been brought together to-day to our last camping-place. The trail has been a long one, and the difficulties numerous. You and I have pitched our tents together many a time in that land we love so well, and we have come to the parting of the ways once more. As for you, my friend, your camping days are over.

We are not going to pitch your tent to-night. You do not need it, for you have travelled far on the King's highway, and it has pleased Him to call you home. You have entered into that 'house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' You have reached the King's country, and the guests of the Eternal are homed in palaces, not tents. As for that frail tent in which you tabernacled amongst us, we have brought it along with us. Loving hands have folded it up, and perfumed it with the tears of their hearts. We will put it aside carefully and reverently in its last resting-place, not that you will need it again, but simply because it is yours. And from a force of lifelong habit we would like once again to join the 'boys' as they pass your bier one by one, and say 'Sleep well, my master!' knowing well that there will be no morning call for you in our camp to-morrow.

"We shall press on the best we can on the same old trail, and others will join us in the way until there shall be a highway for the King right through Congoland.

"'Sala leka kiambote, Mfumu!' 'Sleep well, my master!'"

When the news of Mr. Lewis's death reached Kibokolo a memorial meeting was held, when, amongst others, the first convert spoke in praise of his old master, and many instances of the missionary's devotion were revealed. This, reported by the Rev. Edward Holmes, is one of them:

"One day when Zombo blood ran hot and excitement clouded common-sense, he stood before a howling mob calm and quiet. He was pleading in that appealing voice of his for some sane thinking. He told the story of God's love to man, but the crowd grew more and more hostile. Then some of the bolder spirits gathered up sand, so thick in Zombo, and threw it into his face. This was repeated again and again, but without rebuke he slowly took his handkerchief from his pocket and, wiping his smarting eyes, continued his story of the Saviour's love."

That was Thomas Lewis!

THE BRITISH BAPTIST MISSION STATIONS ON THE CONGO.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	EARLY YEARS	1
II	AT COLLEGE	10
III	BEFORE THE CANDIDATE COMMITTEE	18
IV	SAILING FOR AFRICA	26
V	ALONG THE WEST AFRICAN COAST	36
VI	VICTORIA AND ITS PEOPLES	46
VII	MY FIRST CHRISTMAS IN AFRICA	59
VIII	GERMANY ANNEXES CAMEROONS	69
IX	LAST DAYS IN CAMEROONS	80
X	MY FIRST FURLOUGH	95
XI	FIRST VOYAGE UP THE CONGO RIVER	105
XII	SAN SALVADOR AND THE FIRST BAPTISMS	114
XIII	MOSTLY CONCERNING COLLEAGUES	124
XIV	THE KING'S GOLDEN NECKLACE	133
XV	DEVELOPMENTS OF THE NATIVE CHURCH	150
XVI	BUILDING A MISSION STATION	158
XVII	PIONEERING IN ZOMBOLAND	171
XVIII	MOVING THE TENT	183
XIX	TRAVELS FROM KIBOKOLO	190
XX	DIFFICULTIES AND SETBACKS	199
XXI	A CRITICAL PERIOD	209
XXII	FURTHER TRAVELS	218
XXIII	CHANGES	229
XXIV	KIMPESE AND THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW	236
XXV	UNSETTLED DAYS AND RETURN TO KIMPESE	247
XXVI	A FRESH START AT KIBOKOLO	257
XXVII	"THE STONES OF KIBOKOLO"	268
XXVIII	REFLECTIONS	275
XXIX	NKAND'A NZAMBI—BOOK OF GOD	282
XXX	FINAL WORDS	288
	INDEX	297

ILLUSTRATIONS

Facing page

PORTRAIT FRONTISPIECE

THE COTTAGE AND SMITHY AT PONTYVENNY - - - - 16

SOME OF THE MEN OF CAMEROONS AND CONGO - - - 64

CAMEROONS MISSION CENTRES - - - - - - 102

SAN SALVADOR CHURCH AND SCHOOL HOUSE - - - - 152

KIMPESE - - - - - - - - - - 204

THE NEW CHAPEL AT KIBOKOLO - - - - - - 242

THE KONGO BIBLE REVISION COMMITTEE AT WORK - - - 284

MAPS

THE BRITISH BAPTIST STATIONS ON THE CONGO - - - x

THE CAMEROONS MISSIONS IN 1922 - - - - - 93

THE DISTRICT OF SAN SALVADOR AND KIBOKOLO - - - 221

These Seventy Years

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER I

Early Years

I was born on the 13th of October, 1859, in a little cottage, still standing, at Pontyvenny, about two miles out of Whitland on the St. Clears road, in the county of Carmarthen. My father, William Lewis, was a blacksmith, badly paid, I fear, by his farmer customers. He had inherited the business from his father, Thomas Lewis, after whom I was named, a man well known for his devout life and strength of character, a strong Baptist and a staunch supporter of the church at Salem, Mydrim.

My mother came of a preaching family, which may account for her great desire for her first-born to become a minister. Her maiden name was Edwards, from the Edwardses of Ffynongain. Her father and two of her uncles were "preachers" with the Methodists and Independents. I remember as a lad being present at the funeral of one of them at the churchyard at Glandwr.

My mother died when I was only eleven years of age. Soon after her marriage her health began to fail, and I cannot remember seeing her strong and well. I can recall only three or four occasions when she

was able to leave the house, and once only when she went to chapel. I also remember with great admiration the visits of the farmer-pastor of "Nazareth," Whitland, Theophilus Thomas of Blaenlliwe, to conduct religious services at our little cottage for her benefit, the neighbouring church members also coming to join at the Communion service. I little understood then the import of these things, but they come vividly to my mind now as I look back through the years.

We were five children in all. My only sister died young, and between the ill-health of mother and the needs of the young family, my father had to fight a strenuous battle to keep the wolf from the door. I am sure most men would have perished in the conflict. So it came to pass that poverty and hardship were the constant companions of my youth, and I was forced to face difficulties very early in life. The present age knows nothing, thanks to God, of the difficulties and hardships that young men had to face sixty or eighty years ago. It would be a shame to our Christianity if they did. Nevertheless, I am certain that the bitter struggles of my early days have been an immeasurable assistance to me in bearing the loneliness and trials of my missionary life.

The education offered me in childhood was very meagre and poor, and I had to leave it to begin work when I was eleven years of age. I attended two day schools attached to the Independent chapels of Soar and Bethlehem, and left both with my character for honesty untarnished! Not a few of my schoolmates in those worthy academies have done well in life, so it was not altogether the fault of my teachers that I did not succeed better. My chum at Bethlehem

afterwards became the popular Chief Librarian of Bangor University College, a recognised authority on Welsh History and Language. In those early days, Tom Shankland was as poor as myself in every way save one : he had a fine fist and loved using it on occasion. I made my way in those days literally under the shadow of my friend's protection, and I cannot imagine an ampler championship for any boy at school. When he left for Bala to earn his living I had to fight my own battles, and the good example of my master was a great help. When he passed away, in the early part of 1928, I happened to be fulfilling some missionary engagements in North Wales, and at his funeral service at Penuel, Bangor, I was privileged to take part with Principal J. T. Evans and Sir Harry Reichel, the Principal of the University College of Wales, and pay my humble tribute to this friend of my youth. He was laid to rest at Glanadda Cemetery, where many other sons of Wales have been buried.

I learnt much more at home than I ever did at school. My earliest recollection is the journey to Sunday School, carried on my father's shoulders. He never missed it, whatever the weather, although there were over two miles of rough country road to walk. He kept it up all through his life, and was at his place on the Sunday before his death. The "Pwnc" was in fashion at that time, and I knew every catechism I could lay hand on, except that of the Church of England, which was taboo. Even this forbidden tree was surreptitiously raided by some of us, and we found the fruit exceedingly good to our taste. We were all great debaters then, and I remember how I experienced a sense of triumph over my Pædobaptists in quoting the definition of Baptism

in the Church Catechism as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." There was keen competition in reciting between the youths and maidens of Whitland in those days, and here I held my own and won most of the prizes. Some of these stalwarts are still alive, and we enjoy an occasional opportunity for a chat and fight our battles over again.

But I learnt also a quantity of trash, and the religious fare offered to us was sometimes a veritable Diet of Worms. My first hymn learnt "on my mother's knee" gives me a shiver as I think of it now, for it spoke of worms eating my body and my soul hurled away whither it seemeth good to God. Verily the world is improving, especially in its presentation of the love of God to children.

When I began working in the smithy with my father, I had perforce to look upon life from a new angle. It was then that I realised what a strong character my father had. I watched him as he clenched his teeth and turned up his sleeves to his task, and I knew that his mind was in the cottage close by, where my mother's life was fast ebbing away. Nothing daunted him, and I almost worshipped him. He took great pains to teach me my trade, and he led me to love it. This love for the smithy has never left me, and it has brought me much personal satisfaction that I have been able to train a number of Africans as blacksmiths. Had I been granted a son, I think I would have given him the same practical acquaintance with my beloved trade.

Before I was twelve years old I had an experience which now I look back upon as a direct leading of the Lord. It was at the Missionary Prayer Meeting at "Nazareth," on the first Monday in the month.

Our pastor, the Rev. David Davies, of Bwlchgwynt, took for his subject : " William Carey, the Shoemaker Missionary." He repeated that quite erroneous story that Carey was a poor workman and could not make two shoes of equal size, but that God had chosen him to preach the Gospel to the heathen. He said many interesting things that night, but the appeal did not touch me. The following month I was eagerly looking forward to another missionary address, hoping he would say more about Carey's work. To my utter surprise and disappointment, the good old pastor began exactly as he had done the previous month, and gave us the same address right through !

He was probably under the impression that he had given that address previously at Bwlchgwynt, his other church, and not at Nazareth. However, my young mind began to think of various solutions, and I asked myself, " Why this repetition of the same speech ? Was it possible that he was speaking to me all the time ? " This puzzled me for several weeks, and I found myself asking other questions. What does it mean to be a Missionary ? What is it to be a Christian ? Am I one ? I knew I loved Jesus, and the Chapel and Sunday School. I never missed the Young People's Class. My pastor always encouraged me to recite a chapter to introduce the Sunday Evening Service. Was that being a Christian ? I had to reply that it was not. It troubled me, until at last I opened my heart to my father. He had been through that sort of thing himself, and he talked to me. Two or three Sundays afterwards the pastor invited me to tea with him, and so I was led to Baptism and Church Membership.

At that time the leader of our Young Men's Class was one Thomas Thomas, a tailor by trade, and a man

greatly beloved by us all. It was an important day for me when I was transferred to his class. He was a talented man, having read wisely and well, and he was a bard of good standing. Many an evening have I sat in his shop listening to his conversation, which never disturbed his work, but rather helped it along. He knew all the Welsh poets, and many of the English. His most precious possession was Milton's "Paradise Lost," translated into Welsh, of which he never wearied of reciting long passages. It was the influence of this Thomas Thomas that led me to the delights of literature, for he kindled in the heart of many a young man a desire to seek the higher things. We owed him much. Blessed be his memory!

When about sixteen years of age, I set my heart on learning the English language, and I well remember buying a penny reader for the purpose. Other booklets were loaned to me by more fortunate friends. There was no one in the immediate neighbourhood of my home who knew enough English to help me, and I had in the main to rely on myself. After my day's work in the smithy I would seek a quiet place to myself, and spend the night "fishing" for English words. It was hard labour, and not quite in vain, though it is a poor school where the teacher and taught meet in the same person. Fortunately for me a new pastor, fresh from college, the Rev. William Lewis, came to settle at Whitland. Mr. Lewis encouraged me in my studies, and gave two or three evenings a week for English with me. I owe to him more than I can express in words.

It was under his ministry that I was first encouraged to preach; and I began to "exercise my gift" at the Young People's meeting, under the leadership of Thomas Thomas. The first sermon I ever preached

was at a farm-house (Sabulon), near my home. It was the custom in those days to hold prayer meetings and preaching services in the farms and cottages some distance from chapel, especially in the winter months. On this occasion it was harvest-time, and it was well known that they had got the meeting up to hear "young Tom" preach, and provide an opportunity of making a collection to assist him to go to the Grammar School.

We had all been working in the field throughout the day, and after the evening meal the congregation gathered in the spacious kitchen, overflowing into the parlour on one hand and into the dairy on the other. The preacher had at his back a roaring fire, and a table supporting a large family Bible in front of him. There were no hymnbooks used, for our people knew all the hymns worth knowing, and to hold a hymnbook in one's hand was considered an unpardonable affectation. I can only recall now the kindness of the old folk in praising my sermon and prophesying great and glorious things for my future. Even to-day my heart goes back to those faithful souls, and especially to one dear saint, a working man's wife, who as I passed her cottage next morning surreptitiously placed in my hand a golden sovereign, wrapped up in dirty paper and her pure love, saying, "Tom bach, you belong to us all now." As a matter of fact, I believe that all in my audience that night save one were Independents, but they adopted me as a hen adopts a duckling. There was no one to be compared with their young lad. It is sweet to remember their eulogiums and their pride. "Daro, there's nice he was speaking to-night: a good preacher he will be by and by: there's a ring he has in his voice: you listen to me, that boy will be Association preacher before long." Such prophecies are always

pleasing to the heart of a youth, even if they never materialise. It was their way of expressing their desires on my behalf. Sweet simple folk, we miss your sympathy. None, however, dreamed that I would become a missionary to the heathen.

The next step was to preach in a pulpit on Sunday, and my opportunity came when my pastor wanted a "supply" on a Sunday morning at Bwlchgwynt, over two miles away on a bleak mountain. It was a beautiful summer morning when I set out from my cottage home to climb the hills and woods of Pal Mawr. On my way I fell in with the "Master of Ffynoncyll," who was the leading deacon at this chapel, and much esteemed by all. Walking side by side with him as "the preacher" for the day was a new sensation to me, and I felt it a great privilege. I had reached the pinnacle of my ambition—to be counted "among the prophets." My text on this occasion was: "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." This first attempt cost me much labour in preparation, and I was extremely nervous during the whole service. My next attempt was on a Sunday evening in my home church, and this was a severe ordeal, for all my companions were there in force. After this, invitations came from other churches of all denominations in the district, and I could say that I was fairly on the way.

Then came the question of entering College. This presented serious difficulties. Money was scarce, and I could not look to my father for much help. There was an excellent Grammar School at St. Clears, where many ministers and professional men have been trained. The Rev. John Evans, B.A., the Principal, was a minister with the Independents, and he was a born teacher. As this school was only

three miles from my home, it was arranged for me to enter my name there as Scholar, and walk to and fro every day. This saved expense, and my father gave me home and food. I did not know then how much it cost him to do this. How wonderfully parents succeed in hiding the great sacrifices they make for the sake of their children !

At this time I had a friendly cousin living half a mile away from my home who took a keen interest in me. He was a shoemaker with a modest business, and I was always a handy lad, and could mend and sole shoes as well as anyone. One day he offered to reserve all of his shoe-mending that I could do on Saturdays, he supplying all the material necessary. This very generous offer was accepted at once, and in this way I paid my expenses at the Grammar School for over a year.

In 1879 I sat for the entrance examination into Haverfordwest Baptist College. There were more candidates than the authorities were prepared to receive. Out of the two and twenty who presented themselves, only sixteen were accepted. In the test examination I appeared fifth on the list, but owing to my inability to pay the twenty pounds entrance fee, I was forced to wait another year. This was a great disappointment, for it meant in my case returning to the blacksmith's shop for twelve months, studying in the evenings to the best of my ability. This setback was almost too much for even my strong determination, and nearly broke my heart.

CHAPTER II

At College

Many serious thoughts occupied my mind as I stood on the threshold of College life ; and one thing in particular weighed heavily upon my heart and conscience. Should I not declare the purpose I had hitherto concealed in my own heart of becoming a foreign missionary ? I had a great fear lest I should fail to qualify myself for such a task. My difficulty in mastering the English language made me very doubtful whether I could ever learn a foreign tongue, and this fear of failure made me dumb.

I remember being invited when I was at the School to preach at Plashed, near Laugharne, and how I laboured for weeks preparing the prayer and sermon in English. This first attempt to speak in an unfamiliar language was not reassuring. With the help of a dictionary I managed to translate my sermon from Welsh into English ; then I learnt both prayer and sermon by heart. But when at last Sunday evening came, after walking the five or six miles to the chapel, I went through the service with some measure of success, received my five shillings fee at the close, and returned home feeling I had done something great. Two or three days later, my minister, the Rev. William Lewis, met an old fishwife, well known as one of the most faithful souls at Plashed chapel, and inquired of her what sort of sermon they had had ? The old dame replied in her frank manner : " Oh, he be one of them young men fro' the Grammar School—a

good 'nuff young man—but 'e be too scholastic for we. I dinna understand a word he said." That is what comes of the self-satisfied wisdom of youth depending on a dictionary ! Fair play to the good old soul, she told the truth in love ; for, reading over the manuscript years later, I could testify to the reasonableness of her criticism.

This was the youth who entered Haverfordwest College in October, 1880, with his mind made up that he would not divulge anything concerning his ambition to become a missionary. Yet within three months every student knew that I was thinking of nothing else. College is a bad place for keeping secrets of any kind.

It happened that when I entered College the missionary spirit was very noticeable among the students. Timothy Richard had made a name as a Welsh missionary in China, and had left behind him a glorious tradition in the life of the place. On the Notice Board a letter signed by him was exhibited, appealing to the students for missionary service. I found also that three of the senior students had decided to offer themselves to the Baptist Missionary Society—W. G. Davies (of Penarth), Caradoc Griffiths (of Woodville Road, Cardiff), and John Williams (Grangetown, Cardiff). For various reasons the three were rejected by the Committe, but all through their successful home ministries they retained their enthusiasm for Foreign Missions. The last named served on the Missionary Committee for years, and a year or two before his home-call had the great joy of seeing his talented daughter, Miss Winifred Williams, M.A., sail to India as a B.M.S. Missionary. Instead of the father, the daughter !

The weekly missionary prayer meeting, held in

the College classroom, was very popular in those days. None but students attended it, and the warmth and influence of the prayers remain with me to-day. The three brethren mentioned were our leaders at these meetings.

The first year in College was an inspiration to me in many ways. I had entered into a new life very different from that I had lived in the country. Many of my ideals concerning missionary life came to me through the fellowship with my fellow students, and this was a gift of God to a young man. I was fortunate in the decided Christian character of the men who led in the College life of the period. The Rev. David Powell, of Liverpool, was senior student, and he was a tower of strength to us all. Next to him came William Evans, of Crosskeys ; then Edwin Aubrey, father of the present honoured Secretary of the Baptist Union ; and there were also the " missionary men " already mentioned. The spiritual atmosphere of the College never reached a higher point than at this period, as many who are still alive can testify.

My college chums were Thomas Davies, who was for many years the successful minister of Noddfa, Pontycymmer—we shared rooms all through our College course ; and Daniel Jones, who became the minister of my old home church in Whitland, and who earned for himself the name of " the gentleman preacher," so dignified and gracious was he in his demeanour. Both these friends passed away in early middle life. Another was Thomas H. Williams, of Newport, the only one of my old fellow students with whom I have corresponded through the years. He was the son of the great Pembrokeshire preacher, " Williams Llangloffan," and inherited in a marked

degree the sermon-making power of his father. His ministry has been one of the solid kind. I never miss an opportunity of staying with him and his devoted wife at Ty Clyd on my way to or from Wales. There are others now occupying prominent places in the ministry whose fellowship is sweet and fragrant with the memories of the old College days. So much for my fellow students.

What can one say in appreciation of the Principal and tutors, with their unfailing patience and goodness? Dr. Thomas Davies, with his eagle eyes and short stature, was at the head, and ruled wisely and patiently over his family of about thirty young men. He had a dignified manner all his own, and we honoured and loved him, although on occasion we imagined (quite wrongly, I now think) that he was too strict with us. Professor T. Witton Davies, B.A. (as he was then), entered upon his duties as Classical Tutor at Haverfordwest the year that I entered as a student. There was never a man kinder to the students than he. We all accepted him as a friend, and he would do anything to help us. Even after attaining to higher distinctions in the world of learning, he never forgot an old student. When introducing me to his friends he never missed the opportunity of referring to me as "my first student, in fact," and he hardly ever came to London without looking me up at the Mission House. He was greatly interested in the Revision of the Kongo Bible, and gave us valuable hints in regard to Hebrew idioms. Peace be to his memory!

I had not much to do with Dr. Edwards; he left to become Principal of Pontypool College the year I entered, but I owe to him a debt of gratitude not only for his help during the three months I was

under his tuition, but for much kind assistance in later years. He was one of my last and oldest friends.

It is a temptation at this point to write about other friends I made while at College, and the ministers who often visited us. Pembrokeshire was rich in great men about this time. There were Jenkins (Hill-park), Myfyr Emlyn, Phillips (Croesgoch), Thomas (Trelettert), Davies (Llangloffan), and the other Davies, of Maenclochog, Griffiths (Blaenconin), and several others. There may be men of equal power in the county to-day, and perhaps greater, but to us these men were giants ; we considered it an honour to speak to them, and their influence upon our lives was great and lasting.

Before passing from my memories of the good old College days, I want to say how heartily I approve of the system of " living in " which was in vogue at Haverfordwest and Pontypool Colleges. I believe that the Welsh students of the present day, among Baptists at any rate, are at a great disadvantage in this respect. Most of them are still recruited from the working classes of the population, and the discipline of residence together is of tremendous value. The introduction into the home life at College brought us under rules and regulations which had to be observed. Social amenities had a refining influence. To sit down to meals with the President's wife and family was in itself an education and a constant lesson in good manners, no small asset to the Christian minister. College life compelled us to consider others, and was conducive to courteous behaviour. The present day student has gained enormously in opportunities for scholarship ; the curriculum to-day is far in advance of that fifty years ago ; the

advantages and opportunities of University training are such as we then never dreamed of. I sincerely hope, also, that the students have more ambition and capacity for hard work than we had ; there were a few hard workers in the old days, but the Degree of B.A. was considered possible only to the elect, and to be Bachelor of Divinity was a distinction beyond our highest dreams. Many men entered College with the purpose of leaving it at the first opportunity ; the interest and talk were about "vacant churches," and great was the competition for them. The College was considered by the majority only as a stepping stone to the Ministry, and few applied themselves with any seriousness to qualify for their sacred calling.

Yet it was not wholly the fault of the men, for it was patent to all of us that often the poorest students in the classes were the most popular preachers in the churches. It was no consolation to know that their popularity failed them later. There were churches then, and are still, that abhorred scholarship, and only appreciated a man who had the gift of talking. As for thinking, well, how could they appreciate that ? One need only mention David Powell, one of the greatest thinkers of the Denomination in Wales during the past fifty years ; he was head and shoulders above anybody in the College, but he was given an extension of time because there was no room for him in any church in Wales ! When he left he had to be satisfied with one of the smallest churches in Radnorshire, and had to move to Liverpool to be appreciated.

I venture to express these views because of my own experience. I came to think while at College that education was not at all necessary for the preaching

of the Gospel, at any rate to ignorant and primitive people such as the Africans, and I longed to get away to the Mission field with all possible haste. I did not neglect my studies, and I believe I worked harder than most, for study was a pleasure to me ; yet when the Rev. J. B. Myers, Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, visited Haverfordwest to plead the claims of the Mission, and made an appeal for a missionary to the Cameroons, I went up to him at the close of that meeting and offered myself there and then without consulting Principal or Tutor. Mr. Witton Davies begged me to reconsider the matter, and remain my full time in College ; for I was only beginning my third year, and had already been working for my Arts degree ; but my missionary zeal blinded me to everything else, so I disregarded his sound advice, and forthwith sent in my application to the B.M.S. for work in the Cameroons ; and in a month's time, on the first of December, 1882, I was accepted and told to prepare to sail for Africa at the beginning of February.

This was the great mistake of my life. Had I taken the advice of my tutor, my value to the Baptist Missionary Society would have been doubled, and my usefulness as a Congo Missionary greatly enhanced. As it happened, I was afterwards called upon to take some share in the translation and revision of the Kongo Bible, and then I realized how foolish it was for me to have thrown away in earlier days the valuable opportunities given me to master the languages essential for such labour.

I write this as a word of warning to young men who hope to become missionaries abroad. The first duty of a young man is to seize every opportunity of qualifying himself for his life's work.

THE SMITHY AT PONTYVENNY, WITH THOMAS LEWIS'S FATHER AND BROTHER.

THE COTTAGE AT PONTYVENNY IN WHICH THOMAS LEWIS WAS BORN.

Facing page 16

The last two months before I sailed were full of bustle and excitement. At the request of the Committee it was arranged for me to get some practice in school teaching and management, and Mr. Rees, the headmaster of the Barn Street School, took me in hand for a short period and was a real help to me, for one of the chief departments of Mission work is teaching the children.

A farewell and designation meeting was held at Bethesda (where I was in membership), when Dr. Davies, Professor Witton Davies, Mr. Jenkins, of Hillpark, Mr. Angus and several of my fellow students spoke kind words of cheer. The following evening we had a meeting of students only, when supper was served in the Lecture Hall, and I was the recipient of several gifts : one from the students was a pair of binoculars, a much treasured possession to this day.

Then in the top room of the College there came what has always been referred to amongst us as "the gathering in the upper room." We were there into the small hours of the morning ; each student spoke, and it was a sacred time ; and I remember even to-day the prayers that were offered for me and for my work in Africa.

Thus ended my brief College career.

CHAPTER III

Before the Candidate Committee

On the first of December, 1882, I had my first sight of London, if one may be said to have "seen" anything through the thick fog that enveloped the city that day. I certainly could not see across the street, and the gas lamps made a very poor show. There were no electric lights or incandescent mantles then, and the faint glimmers appeared to be like ghostly sentinels guiding the cumbrous traffic of some mysterious world. I wondered whether this was the usual thing in London. I had been summoned by Mr. Alfred H. Baynes to meet the Candidate Committee at the Mission House in Castle Street, as Furnival Street was then called, and my heart nearly failed me as I peeped through the fog at Paddington Station.

On the way up from Wales I had the fortune—or misfortune—to fall into the hands of a clergyman interested in something he called "British Israelism," and he left me with a good supply of literature on that all-important subject. It was the first time I had heard of the Banner of Israel, and I was too dense to grasp the purport of its teaching. I remember telling him that I was a Welshman, and had never taken much interest either in the English or the Israelites, adding that just then I was far more interested in the African people and in winning them to be true Israelites. I was glad when we parted.

Getting out of the station, I stood for some time at the corner of the exit wondering when the cabs would stop and let me find the omnibus I had been told to hail. A fellow student who knew London well had advised me to get on the top of a bus, as I could thus see the city better. But, alas, I could not distinguish one vehicle from the other in the fog. Some kind gentleman noticed my helplessness, asked where I wanted to go, and very graciously handed me over to the care of the bus conductor.

I climbed a perpendicular iron ladder and scrambled for a place on the "knife-board" seat, with my feet against the bottom rail on the edge. My friend had told me this was the best way to see London! I started counting the ghostly lights flickering in the fog, and I thought of things, and of London. I began to fear that the conductor had forgotten me, when I saw his head appearing at the top of the ladder, shouting in "musical cockney" something about Castle Street. I grasped my little handbag, clambered down as fast as I could, looked around me, and realized that I was in London somewhere, for I spied an angel in a blue uniform assisting pedestrians across Holborn, and under his wing I crossed the road.

In answer to my inquiry for Castle Street he replied, "First to the right," and in two or three minutes I was ringing the bell at the door of the "Great House." It was after office hours, but the housekeeper was expecting me, and soon he led me across Holborn again, and through a maze of narrow, winding streets until he deposited me at the hotel where I was to stay. Mr. Kirkland, the housekeeper, was a wonderful character, and there are many stories still extant about him. He saw that

the young candidate was a raw country lad, without any experience of town life, so he fathered me carefully, and insisted on introducing me to Mr. Walduck, the proprietor. This latter gentleman and his family were faithful members at Bloomsbury Chapel, and I have received much kindness from their hands since that first night at their hotel.

Next morning, following the instructions of my guide and friend of the night before, I found my way to the Mission House, where I was received by the Rev. J. B. Myers, and felt quite at home with him. It was he who had won my heart a month before at Haverfordwest, and had spoken of me as a "promising candidate." He remained the same kind friend to me all through the years until we laid his worn out body in the grave at Watford a few years ago. He was one of the most charming men I knew, and he always reminded me that I was his "missionary son."

The usual procedure with the Candidate Committee is to supply the candidate with a long list of questions. He is asked to reply in his own words and in his own way. Stress is laid on the fundamental truths of the Gospel, especially in reference to the Divinity of Christ. I found no difficulty in answering most of them, for I had been brought up under the Sunday School Divines at Whitland, and regularly fed at College on Hodge's "Outlines of Systematic Theology." But when I came to the questions asking if I had been used of God in the conversion of men, I was aghast, for I could not record one instance. My idea of a missionary or minister was one who could preach sermons. The question, and my failure in answering it, left me with a greatly troubled mind. I determined to be honest, and confessed that I knew of

no converts as the result of my preaching, but then naïvely added that "I thought my preaching had been of some edification to the churches"!

This was in the written catechism. Now came the more formidable personal interview with the Committee.

I was kept waiting in Mr. Myers' room, and my heart was heavy with the knowledge that the wise men were then considering my written replies. After what seemed an interminable time, my friend appeared at the door, saying that the Committee would like to see me. He took me by the arm, and whispered, "You need not be at all afraid, for neither Dr. A. nor Mr. B. is present to-day." I learnt afterwards that those two great men were a terror to candidates, but I confess that I had never heard the name of the one or the other.

A moment more, and I was ushered into the presence of about a dozen of the greatest men of our Denomination in England. The voice of the Chairman, the Rev. J. P. Chown, of Bloomsbury, was rather startling at first, but his face was delightful; he was kindness personified, and he said a few words which placed me at my ease. Then one after another asked me questions. I cannot remember all who were present, but I found afterwards they included Dr. Underhill, Dr. Trestrail, Charles Williams, of Accrington, J. T. Brown, of Northampton, Dr. Glover, of Bristol, and, of course, Mr. A. H. Baynes, the Secretary. The answers given to their questions were very unsatisfactory to myself. Somebody asked if I had preached on Sunday, and I replied that I had. "What was your text? Can you give us the points of your sermon?" I gave my simple outline. Somebody remarked, "Very good indeed: Welshmen are taught to preach." This encouraged

me ; and then somebody referred to the College printed report showing the marks I had been given in German. "According to this list, Mr. Lewis, you seem to have done excellently in German. Can you speak German fluently ?" This was my opportunity, and I replied truly and humbly that I remembered the time when I could speak German quite as fluently as I could English ! I chuckled, for not one of these great men saw the point.

Then the radiant face of a white-haired gentleman turned to me. Fixing his glasses to his eyes, he said sweetly : "Suppose now, Mr. Lewis, that the Committee were to send you to Africa, to a place where no white man had ever been, and a crowd of savages rushed down to the beach to meet you with spears and bows and arrows. What would you do ?" He was Dr. Glover. I looked at him aghast, and confessed : "Really, sir, I do not know what I would do." This was followed by a hearty laugh all round the room, and the Chairman said, "Thank you, Mr. Lewis : that will do." I could hardly lift up my eyes with the shame of it all, and I can only recollect Mr. Myers opening the door and telling me to wait in his room. I longed to rush out into the streets and escape to my own native land. I suppose it was only five minutes (they seemed so many hours to me) before Mr. Myers came to fetch me back, saying, "It is all right—you did well." Then I heard Mr. Chown's voice telling me that the Committee were going to accept me for the Cameroons ; and he asked Mr. Trafford, an old missionary from India, to speak a few words to me on behalf of the Committee, and for about three or four minutes the music of the veteran's voice and words made me the happiest man in the world.

After that came luncheon, and then I understood that there were other candidates before the Committee, all for the Cameroons. It was the custom for the Committee to have candidates sitting with them at lunch so that they might know each other better. The others, also accepted that morning, were Mr. Samuel Silvey, of Moss Side, Manchester, and Miss Gertrude Fletcher, of Liverpool.

Later in the afternoon, Mr. Myers invited me to a cup of tea in his room, and then described to me some things that had happened in the Committee room. I told him how I had thought that all was over for me when they all laughed, and I was dismissed. "Why," said he, "that was the best reply you made." I found afterwards that the good Doctor was in the habit of asking questions of that order to test the self complacency of candidates. I firmly believe that this negative virtue expressed in my answer was in his eyes my chief recommendation for the work.

Hitherto I have not mentioned the name of the Rev. Quintin W. Thomson, son-in-law of the great Alfred Saker, who on the death of his father-in-law had become the leader of the West African Mission. He and his wife were then in England, planning for the extension of the Mission, and especially for an advance in the education of the people. Messrs. Comber and Grenfell had left the Cameroons three years before to establish the Congo Mission. Several men of the Duala tribe had been set apart as Native Pastors, and the call was for better education with a view to further development of native workers. The three new recruits were designated for this special work. Mr. Silvey was a certificated master ; and I was asked to seek training in School Management between then

and the date of sailing. Miss Fletcher was going to join Miss Comber at the Girls' School at Victoria, and we were all to sail with Mr. and Mrs. Quintin Thomson at an early date.

The first thing I did after lunch was to send a telegram with the good news to Haverfordwest. Later in the evening, Mr. Baynes called me to his room. In the Committee Mr. Baynes was an official, but I now met the man, a man with a big heart. I have not yet heard of anybody who has given a satisfactory description of this giant among men, this prince of Missionary Secretaries. All missionaries loved him. He won our hearts in the first interview. When in trouble or difficulty it was the natural thing to turn to Mr. Baynes, and we never turned to him in vain. He sought every opportunity to show kindness. One of his regular questions after talking business was, "And now, what about yourselves? Have you enough to go on with? Things are dear to buy." And he would then surreptitiously slip a bank-note into the hand, with a word, "You will find it useful." There were no notes under five pounds then, and I have known him to give more than one at a time. As a matter of fact, he knew the personal circumstances of all the missionaries, and to them he was not an official, but a friend and brother.

So I found him now, for learning that I had never been to London before, he suggested that I should stay over the week-end to see the city and hear Spurgeon. He would be responsible for my hotel expenses. So it came to pass that I remained in the city in company with Mr. Silvey, and Friday evening found us both in the House of Commons. To obtain a pass was difficult, for the only Member I

knew was not there that evening. We tried two or three others whose names I knew, with no success. The official, however, noticed that I gave my address as from Haverfordwest ; he suggested that I should apply to Lord Kensington, and to my delight in a very short time I found myself talking to a real Lord, and he got me entrance to the Strangers' Gallery.

On Sunday my disappointment was great, for after tramping down to the Tabernacle, I found that Spurgeon was not preaching. In the evening I heard Joseph Parker at the City Temple, but I do not even remember his text. On my return from Africa, I heard both these great men, and I remember hearing Spurgeon preaching his last sermon in the Tabernacle, on the Prodigal Son, when his text was, "And he kissed him much."

CHAPTER IV

Sailing for Africa

Forty years ago it was not a small matter for a raw and inexperienced youth to leave his friends and his native land for a country noted for its inhospitable climate and savage people. The West Coast of Africa had well earned for itself the name of "The White Man's Grave," and the romance of African travel and bush life did not lessen the real dangers of this fever-laden land. At that time I had only vague ideas of the hardships to be endured and difficulties to be overcome, but I had honestly counted the cost of my venture, and was prepared to pay it with my life. On this point there was no hesitation on my part. I consulted not with flesh and blood, and I have never regretted my action then.

But there was one thing that worried me a great deal, and I travelled forward with a halting step. Could I so fully and freely give myself to Africa and the African as to consider myself one of them? Was it possible for me to detach myself from my own nation and country and become a brother to the negro? I feared that this would be an impossible task, yet I felt that nothing less was demanded of me. I sought for some inward assurance, and found none. Still I determined to make it the chief aim of my life. And I have succeeded perhaps more than most, for I have to confess to having lost most, if not all, of my pride of race, and the pull in my heart to-day is all towards Africa. Circumstances

have called me home to duties in connection with the Missionary Society in my native land, but I infinitely prefer preaching the Gospel to the savages of Zomboland to coaxing and persuading the "saints" to contribute towards Missions. Every young man thinking of missionary work abroad will do well to settle this question for himself once for all.

It was with this determination that I left my home at Whitland on the morning of the 6th of February, 1883. On the evening before, a Valedictory Meeting was held at Nazareth Chapel. Most of those who took part on that occasion are no longer alive. Two of my intimate chums at College, the Revs. Thomas Davies and J. S. Johns, died some years ago, but the Rev. D. Rees is in retirement in Radnorshire. The ministers of all the denominations in the district were at the meeting, as were all my companions of early days, some of whom have been chief leaders of the church at Nazareth through the years.

I remember very little of the addresses delivered: feelings were deep, and some of the friends were in tears thinking that they would never again see "young Tom" in the flesh. In that congregation there was another "young lad" several years my junior, occupying a seat near the door. He took a deep interest in the proceedings, and had his dark brown eyes fixed on the speakers, and perhaps, as I like to think, envying the departing missionary. It never occurred to anybody present that a few years later he would be swaying huge congregations all over England and Wales with his eloquence, and would become the popular pastor of Bloomsbury Chapel. And even "Tom Phillips" himself never dreamed that two of his highly equipped and talented children would be actually on the Mission Field when the "young

missionary" was writing reminiscences of his forty years' labours on the field. So the Apostolic succession runs from father to son, and mother to daughter, and leads us back to unlikely places such as a back seat in a country chapel at a Missionary Meeting.

Three of my friends accompanied me as far as Carmarthen, where I was to catch the train to Liverpool, and there I broke off all connection with my home. On reaching Liverpool, I deposited my luggage in the cloak-room and went in search of the little hotel where a room had been engaged for me and where I found Mr. Silvey waiting. A note from our leader, Mr. Quintin Thomson, asked us to proceed immediately to Pembroke Chapel to attend a Farewell Meeting for the party. It was Miss Gertrude Fletcher's home church, and there was a large gathering for her sake. The Rev. R. Richard was pastor of Pembroke then, and he made me right welcome. The Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, D.D., presided at the meeting and made a rousing speech. This was the only time I heard this great orator. We were a party of five leaving for Africa, and each one of us said a few words, leaving the speech for Mr. Thomson to deliver. After the meeting, there was a reception in the Lecture Hall, and there I met quite a large company of Welsh friends who showed me great kindness.

Next morning we visited the shops and made some last purchases before taking our baggage to the landing stage. We found the s.s. *Lualaba* at anchor out in mid-stream, taking powder and oddments on as deck cargo. She seemed heavily laden and deep down in the water. After long waiting, the tender came alongside, and porters with the baggage, and

passengers with their friends, rushed on board. It was a babel of sounds and shoutings, and I completely lost sight of my stuff and the porter. There was no choice but to trust Providence and porters with my belongings, and soon I found myself the centre of a happy group of Welshmen. They had come to see me safely on board the ship. Among them were Richard Richards, Joseph Davies, of Birkenhead, Charles Davies, "Lector," and W. Williams (son of Williams, Llangloffan) and others. This was indeed an unexpected pleasure.

Just as the orders were shouted from the bridge to let go the ropes, a short, dark-haired man pushed his way through the crowd, evidently coming towards me. He held out his hand to wish me a good voyage, but I had no idea who he was. He slipped into my hand a small parcel carefully tied in paper, and in pure North Wales Welsh said: "Put this in your pocket; it will be handy for you on the voyage." Then with a "good-bye" he jumped back to the landing stage as the tender was moving away.

It all happened in an instant, and I could not thank him. He had taken his place in the crowd, and nobody had noticed his coming up to me. I pointed him out to Mr. Charles Davies, and asked if he knew him. "Oh," said Mr. Davies, "that is John Parry, one of the best men we have in the Village." On opening the packet I found that it contained a pound, in sixpenny pieces and threepenny bits—"to be spent on the voyage." When I reached Africa, I heard that Tom Comber and other missionaries had received similar surprise packets on leaving Liverpool. When the first Congo party sailed, this "little man" saw them off and gave each the usual "small change" of coins, but at the last moment his soul was so stirred

that he pulled off his watch and chain and placed them in Comber's hand with the silver, and then successfully got out of his sight.

A few years later, Comber again sailed from Liverpool with a party, and on reaching the steamer they discovered that each had been the recipient of the mystery packet. Mr. Parry was spoken of by the missionaries as "that mysterious little man in Liverpool!" No one but his wife knew of these secret gifts, and she knew also what it cost him at that time to keep up this custom. His wife was in league with him, and I feel sorry sometimes that I was the means of finding them out. Yet I am glad, for Mr. and Mrs. Parry and I became intimate friends, and their Liverpool home became to me a real Bethany. The widow is still alive, and the children walking in the footsteps of their father, keeping his memory sweet and precious. Never had Everton Village Church a finer man or the Missionary Society a more loyal supporter. His son, Thomas Parry, well known in Liverpool Baptist circles, is a worthy chip of the old block.

The same confusion with baggage and people occurred as we reached the ship, and each one of us had to watch his personal belongings. This done, the signal for all visitors to depart soon hustled them to the gangway, and in a few minutes we were steaming down the River Mersey, and waving farewells to our friends on the tender. We had at last severed our connection with land, for in those good old days there was no "Wireless" to follow us. Gradually Liverpool and Birkenhead disappeared in the haze, and the good ship ploughed her way out to the open sea.

I had never seen the interior of a ship before, and life at sea had no meaning for me. One of the stewards

took charge of me. "What is the number of your cabin, sir?" I said to myself that things were moving very rapidly. Here was I for the first time in my life being waited upon by a steward, and I had already been "sirred" twice! Truly a new experience!

On reaching the cabin I discovered that three young men were waiting for each other to arrange their travelling trunks, and I was to occupy the fourth berth in the narrow cabin. It was the tightest place I was ever in. We were called saloon passengers not without reason, for we were cooped in a series of small, evil-smelling cabins arranged around the only saloon in the vessel. Cabin 17 was almost over the propellers, which churned the deep to the agony of the passengers. My berth was the top one on the outside, and the only light was through the one porthole on a level with it. Opposite the door was the wash-basin. At the bottom of my bed was a smoky colza lamp, which served to distinguish night from day in a lurid fashion. Fresh air there was none, for during the first ten days of our voyage no porthole could be opened, for reasons to be disclosed presently.

The dining-table ran down the whole length of the saloon, and the Captain occupied the seat at the head, while the passengers sat on the upholstered benches on each side, according to their degree. Two or three well-known merchants on the West Coast, who prided themselves on being "Palm Oil Ruffians," were seated next to the Captain. On his left sat the three ladies and the elder missionaries, while Mr. Silvey and I were placed low down towards the bottom. The missionary party numbered seven in all, including the Rev. and Mrs. Fairley, of the Primitive Methodist Society, going to take up work

at Fernando Po. There was an interesting saloon passenger called "Jumbo," the son of the local King of Bonny. He had been studying in England and was now returning to his native land. He was a poor sailor, and he did not make an appearance until we had arrived in the still waters of Funchal Bay.

The Captain was a Welshman named Griffiths, familiarly known as "Ted Griffiths" to distinguish him from another captain of the same name. He was a general favourite on the West Coast, and I received much kindness from him on this and many voyages afterwards.

It would be beyond my powers to describe adequately my fellow passengers on this my first voyage to Africa. They varied as the colours of the rainbow. Among them were the chief agents of three Trading Companies. One who sat in the place of honour next to the Captain at table was nicknamed by his friends "Teapot Henderson, of Benin." A staunch teetotaller, he always carried his private teapot with him, and it was requisitioned at every meal. Another was a gentleman named Captain Bowler, very much respected for his upright character and good deeds at Bonny, and a great friend of missionaries. The third was a Mr. Johnstone, also going to Bonny. This trio of trading chiefs were true West African gentlemen, a credit to their native country and to the class of merchants to which they belonged.

The first evening after leaving Liverpool we were sailing along the Welsh coast, past the Skerries and Holyhead. There was great excitement when we were told that the pilot would be going ashore on the island of Anglesey and would take letters to be posted. Everybody took advantage of this last

opportunity to communicate with friends ; and then we tried to settle down for the long voyage before us.

We passed a more or less comfortable night, and next day were well on our way down the Irish Channel. We had seen the distant heights of Snowdonia the night before, and now Mona's Isle had been left behind in the mist. Towards evening we were abreast of Pembrokeshire, and I could distinguish the outline of the Preselly Hills in the distance. It was here that Williams of Pantycelyn composed that wonderful missionary hymn, "O'er the gloomy hills of darkness," but my thoughts passed over those hills to the little village I called "home," some twenty miles farther away, and they found no resting-place until they came to Haverfordwest, where one dearer to me than life itself was thinking of me and praying for me. That night I shed my first tear since leaving home.

Then the sea began to play with our ship, and most of us seemed to regard life more seriously. When dinner-time came I wondered why only one of the ladies appeared, and I observed that others also were absent from table. Even those who came were very quiet, and stared solemnly into their plates as the soup was served. The Captain and the "old salts" at the head were hilarious, and made inconvenient inquiries and remarks about absentees. I started well with soup, but when fish came on there seemed to be something wrong with the sauce. We were asked if we would take mutton : then I discovered there was something wrong with my appetite —the mutton was not to the taste—well—I don't remember what happened to the sweet course, and I cared less ! My seat was just in line with my cabin ! I made no attempt to get on deck, and

retired as decorously as possible. One of my cabin companions had already found his berth, and I climbed into mine.

That night was very, very long. There was no talk in our cabin, the filthy, smoky lamp in the corner became unbearable, and when daylight came it was a relief to be rid of it. The door was on the hook, and about six o'clock a steward peeped in to ask us if we wished for coffee. We wished for nothing in particular, but some of us tried this concoction, and it gave instant relief to our pangs and woes. Then breakfast was served in the saloon for the old-stagers and able bodied, and the smell of food was final. "Try a dry biscuit, sir," said the steward smilingly—and for the rest it was only dry biscuits and oranges. For four days the storm increased in power, and as nobody in our cabin kept a diary during those days, we drop the curtain over the distressing scenes in Cabin 17.

I learnt afterwards that this was a very severe storm, destined to be spoken of for many years. It reached its full force on the Sunday night, and no passenger was allowed on deck, for the sea washed everything away. One of the life-boats was smashed to pieces by the force of the waves, and several of the sailors were seriously hurt. Much of the deck cargo was washed overboard. Towards one o'clock on the Sunday night a tremendous wave caught the ship astern, and smashed the skylights, and the water rushed into the saloon and cabins. I was thrown out from my berth, and my head caught the wash-basin. I was over knee-deep in water, and clutched the rail of my berth, thinking my last moment had arrived. My companions were huddled together at the other end of the cabin. The vessel righted itself, the

colza lamp was still burning, and in its glimmering light we caught sight of each other. We stared and looked, and each thought the others awful, and then we burst out into a fit of laughter.

Then the sea quieted down, and in a day or so the passengers began to revive ; but our countenances were sad and pale as we rediscovered one another on the " poop " over the saloon at the stern. The last to recover was our negro friend, Jumbo, who declared with a great deal of conviction that the cause of the storm was the unusual number of missionaries among the passengers. Someone suggested to him that the presence of missionaries was the reason why our ship came through it so well !

It was late in the afternoon of the tenth day that we steamed into Funchal Bay. When the ship had dropped her anchor, and the engines had stopped, one felt that heaven could not be a more desirable place than this beautiful island of Madeira.

CHAPTER V

Along the West African Coast

When the storms of life are over, and my sail-torn barque finds its way into the final harbour, I ask for no sweeter sensations than those which I experienced on entering into those peaceful waters. It was like entering the portals of Paradise. The harbour of Funchal is well protected from the Atlantic storms, and provides a safe anchorage for many of our largest vessels.

What first arrested our admiring attention was the clearness of the water, revealing the wealth of stones and shells lying at the bottom. No sooner did the ship cast anchor than about a score of small boats surrounded our vessel, the occupants shouting out their wares in bad English, and competing vociferously for the attention of the passengers. We paid little attention to these at first, for a troupe of boy divers had arrived, and we watched them diving for threepenny-bits and sixpences which the passengers threw into the sea. These boys provide a creditable entertainment for travellers on passing vessels, and sometimes they perform extraordinary diving feats. No matter how far away the coins enter the water, two or three of the lads soon reach the spot, and we see the glittering silver far down in the depth, the boys following like fishes, and then bringing up in triumph their "catches." After showing them to the passengers, they deposit the coins in their mouths, at the same time shouting for "another sixpence."

After a while, free to admire the terraces of vineyards and gardens on the slopes and the hills forming a background of rich green foliage, we realised that it was not without reason that the old explorers had called the island "Madeira"—the wooded isle. The distant peaks were clad in clouds which served to enhance its beauty and grandeur. The town itself is most picturesque with its "quintas" and gardens right up the mountains, while the flat roofs and red-coloured tiles give the place quite an oriental effect. The flowers and variegated plants in the gardens were a constant feast to the eye.

Mr. Smart, of the Seamen's Mission, came on board and took us ashore, and we had dinner in one of the English hotels in the town, an agreeable experience after the fare on the ship. Life began again to appear worth living. The profusion of floral table decorations and the delicate flavour of the fruit were greatly appreciated, and we did ample justice to a sumptuous repast. I have visited the island many times since, always with pleasure, but never with such zest as on this first visit.

Mr. Smart took us around the shops, and although it was long after business hours, the tradesmen were glad to re-open their premises for us. We made a good many purchases of quaint Madeira goods, and more especially some luxuries in the way of provisions for afternoon teas on board, and a quantity of fruit and flowers. On this occasion, however, we were not able to visit the cathedral and places of interest in the town, for it was night, and the streets were badly lit. The roads were paved with smooth pebbles, and the natives for the most part went barefooted. The bullock cars were the only vehicles in use then, and they slid over the stones in silence, except for the

shouts of the drivers running alongside with their long sticks. They used their goads rather too freely to please us. It was a quaint, albeit uncomfortable, mode of transport.

The favourite excursion for travellers who were fortunate enough to arrive in the day-time was the visit to Mount Church, which can be seen high on the hills behind the town. The usual procedure was to ride up on mules, or to climb on foot, and then slide down in " carros " over the zigzag road specially prepared. The journey up takes about an hour, but the return dash down only five or ten minutes. The " carros " are low sledges with seats for three or two persons, and they are guided on the downward course by two men standing on the ledge behind, and using their feet to keep the car on its course. The corners are very sharp, and the slightest miscalculation on the part of the guides at the turning may have very serious results. To the novice it is a most exciting experience, though he does not appreciate the scenery *en route*, for he shuts his eyes most of the time, and when at last the " carro " stops innocently in a quiet street at the bottom he wonders what is the matter with his ears—the flight through the air has set all the bells a-ringing within them. Those who desire to go fast will do well to stop their ears with cotton-wool before starting.

On one occasion my friend Mr. W. C. Parkinson and his daughter came to meet us at Madeira, and we spent some happy days together there. This gentleman and a lady visitor on the island were very anxious to do this trip, and I took charge of the party and volunteered to risk my life to give them their heart's desire. I arranged with two men to take us down in a three-seater. These are faster

than the two-seaters because of the extra weight. Before we came up, my friends were anxious to get very fast runners and to do the thing well. I was careful to oblige them, but when we were seated, facing the deep ravine at the first corner a few yards away, their hearts failed them and they wished me to tell the men to go *very slowly* ; and as they did not understand Portuguese, I explained to the men that this gentleman and lady wanted to go as fast as possible, and to make the matter doubly sure I slipped an extra coin into the carman's hand, and off we went. The men earned their extra tip. It was the maddest ride I ever had, and none of us wished to repeat the experiment !

But on this journey it was night before we landed, and we were denied the exciting experiences of a Mount Church sledge-car. We returned to the ship about midnight, and found the cabins more stuffy than before, but with this difference, there was a most uncanny quietness and steadiness about the berths, and one felt free to go to sleep without clinging to the side-rail. By this time the bustle and noise attendant on coaling operations had ceased, and gradually the parties of passengers were rowed back in small boats to be ready for an early start in the morning. Soon after six o'clock the *Lualaba* proceeded out of harbour, and turned her bow towards the coast of Africa. We watched Madeira receding in the distance, and about mid-day had the last glimpse of this "Jewel of the Atlantic" disappearing in the mist.

On the Sunday morning after leaving Madeira a religious service was held in the saloon, Mr. Quintin Thomson officiating. The service itself is generally according to the prayer-book, to accommodate the

majority, but the minister is free to conduct it in his own way.

On the evening of the second day from Madeira we passed between the two principal islands of the Canaries, and most of us saw for the first time the glorious peak of Teneriffe in the distance, rising majestically from the sea. It appeared to grow higher and bigger every hour as we approached, and towards evening we had passed the island, and the "vision beautiful" vanished in the darkness.

We were several days in getting to Sierra Leone, our next port of call, and already we felt the sun getting warmer and warmer. There were not many deck games played in those days, for the simple reason that there was hardly any deck unoccupied by cargo.

The evenings were spent in various ways. Many were devotees of the card-tables, and these met after dinner in the saloon, but there was very little gambling among the company. The Missionary party generally had singing on deck, and we were glad when the distant hills of Sierra Leone were sighted, and one of the older members of the party drew our attention to the lion-like shape of the mountains stretching out towards the sea, which had led the early explorers to give them their name, Sierra Leone—the Lion Mountains. Freetown is about ten miles up the Sherboro River, and when the ship dropped anchor in the harbour opposite the town we had our first experience of what the tropical sun could do. We were advised not to go ashore, as the heat was too great and we were to resume the voyage in the afternoon. The most prominent building in the town is the handsome English Cathedral, a symbol of the great work accomplished by the Church Missionary Society

in that Colony. The principal Wesleyan Chapel is close by, with the buildings of the American Mission a little above.

We called on the Liberian coast for Kru-boys to work the ship, and to take up passenger "boys" for different places along the coast. Merchants and others depend on Kru-boys for their labour. They went in gangs on a two years' contract.

These men (who are always spoken of as "boys") come out in very small canoes just big enough to carry two people, and they paddle at a tremendous rate to the ship at anchor about three miles from the beach. It is exciting to watch them climbing up the ropes alongside, and holding by their teeth the small parcels of their personal baggage. As many as sixty boys are employed on the ship working cargo, and generally the same company returns to the same captain voyage after voyage. After taking these men on board life was changed to most of us, for the noise was great. Whether they were working cargo, paddling the boats or cleaning the ship, they worked in gangs, and kept singing all the time their quaint African dirges, which after a few days became very monotonous. But the never-to-be-forgotten suffering came about four o'clock in the morning, when they commenced rubbing the deck over our heads with sand and holy-stone!

The ship called at many places along the coast, but did not go inshore until we reached Bonny, in the Niger Delta. There our vessel lay for three days at anchor in mid-channel, but not far away from a wooden pier belonging to one of the trading houses, discharging cargo, which included a large quantity of rum, gin and powder.

The native town was about a mile farther down, and

here we had our first opportunity of seeing the real African in his own land. We called on Bishop Crowther at his Mission Station, and attended an afternoon service in the little iron building which served as a Cathedral. The Niger Delta has its own Bishopric, the bishop and clergymen being all Africans. It was the C.M.S.'s first experiment at an Independent African Church. The present Bishop is Dr. Howells, with whom I had the pleasure of travelling from Lagos to Port Harcourt in 1921, when he was on his way to take up his duties on his appointment to his office.

While the *Lualaba* was lying off Bonny, a homeward-bound steamer came in with a party of Missionaries on board. Among them was the veteran Missionary of the Scotch Presbyterian Church at Old Calabar, Mr. Anderson. He came across to see his old friend and fellow-countryman, Quintin Thomson, and I remember how eagerly we young missionaries listened to their conversation about missionary matters. The Cameroons is separated from Calabar only by the mountain, and the two fields join, so the missionaries had much in common to talk about. We had quite a missionary party to tea that afternoon, and I shall never forget "Daddy" Anderson, as he was lovingly called, going on his knees on deck before parting, with his arms stretched out, and his white beard flowing in the breeze, asking God's blessing upon us, and especially on the "young missionaries" in their work. Afterwards he turned round to Mr. Silvey and myself, put his hands on each of our shoulders, and spoke to us. "Young men," said he, "you are beginning a great life, and you will allow me, an old man, to give you a word of advice. Never allow yourselves in your missionary work to get into

a rut, and endeavour, as far as possible, to occupy your mind with some interest or hobby quite distinct from your work. It is the only way you can avoid becoming a crank and an annoyance to everybody around you." I did not realise the inwardness of his remarks at the time, but two or three years later they came back to me in all their pathos. The old patriarch had been pouring out to us the bitterness of his own personal experience. When the glamour and romance of missionary life began to abate, and the loneliness and trials crowded in upon me, I recalled his words of wisdom, and began to look around me for some channel of relaxation from the tedious routine of my daily duties. I tried in several directions, and at last found salvation in the study of Astronomy and Geography.

Two days after leaving Bonny, we came to the island of Fernando Po. The Captain had decided to call there and at Victoria and land the missionary party before entering into the Calabar River.

It was early on Sunday morning when our ship steamed into Clarence Bay, and we could see by the crowd gathered together on the Mission Hill that they were preparing to give our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Fairley, a great welcome. Our thoughts went back, and we tried to picture another landing, that of Alfred Saker and his party of freed slaves from Jamaica on the same spot over forty years before. This morning the Mission boat came out for the new missionaries, and at the landing place they were met by the whole Christian community, numbering many hundreds. We watched the procession marching up the winding road to the Station on the hill, and the hymns they sang were distinctly heard on the *Lualaba*.

It was not considered etiquette for us to land and

partake of the reception which was meant for their own missionaries. Our welcome later on in the day was none the less hearty, and it was a pleasure to visit the Mission which had been the centre of the Primitive Methodists' activity for years.

Fernando Po is only about twenty miles from the mainland, and Victoria nestles under the Cameroons Mountain just opposite. There was then constant communication in small boats and cutters between Clarence Bay and the mainland, and we found several Victorians waiting for us on the beach. Mr. Silvey and I were chiefly interested in these, as they were adherents of our own Mission, and we made friends with them at once.

Now we understood for the first time that the Senior Missionary at Victoria always acted as Governor of that little Colony under English protection, and, therefore, it was Mr. Quintin Thomson's duty to pay an official visit to the Spanish Governor at Fernando Po. Audience was granted on Sunday afternoon, and Mr. Thomson took us all with him to pay our respects to His Excellency at Government House. So little by little it dawned upon me that an African Missionary had to play many parts, but it did not enter my dreams that within a year I would have to assume the position myself as successor to Quintin Thomson.

That Sunday night I lay in my cabin alone : my fellow occupants had left at Bonny, and as I reviewed the happenings of the day, I was excited at the prospects of greater events when we would land at our destination next morning. The stillness of the night in the quiet harbour helped me to think, but it was like being in dreamland. About two or three in the morning the engines began to work once more, and

the vessel moved out quietly into the sea to take us across at half-speed to arrive at Victoria by daybreak.

We were all up and on deck by this time, and the daylight unveiled before us the finest view that I have ever seen. In the background the Giant Mountain, piercing the clouds about 14,000 feet above us, seemed to be awakening from its night's slumber, its proud and hoary head already bathed in the first glorious rays of the rising sun. A few minutes later the pointed peak of Little Cameroons on the left was tipped with a golden shaft of descending light, which in its course revealed to our view scores of lesser volcanic spurs clad in virgin tropical verdure, and finally left the complete vision under the sheen of the glory of the Almighty Creator.

The township of Victoria lay like a gem inside an inner bay, its whitewashed bungalows nestling in the ample shade of its cocoanut palms and other richly coloured foliage. Anchor was dropped about three miles out at sea, boats came out for cargo, and the greatest part of the morning was spent in discharging goods and stores for the use of the Mission, including an eight-oared life-boat to negotiate the dangerous creeks and open sea between Victoria and the Cameroons.

Mr. Dixon, the missionary in charge, took us ashore in a small rowing boat, and we had a noisy and hearty welcome from the crowd of people awaiting our arrival. Miss Comber, the only other member of the Mission staff, was down with fever at the time, but she insisted on getting up to share in the welcome. This was on the 9th of March, 1883.

CHAPTER VI

Victoria and Its Peoples

At first it was a sore disappointment to find Victoria such a beautiful spot, and its inhabitants so well dressed and even speaking English. Dr. Glover's question in the Candidate Committee had lodged in my heart, and I really had had the impression that on my arrival in Africa I might be met by wild savages with bows and arrows. I certainly was not prepared for the reception given to the missionaries that day. Instead of naked savages thirsting for my blood, there was a civilised company of men and women in all their Sunday best waiting for us on the beach. Many of the women wore silk dresses, and displayed well-starched petticoats over dark bare feet. Some had European hats, but the majority covered their heads with the dexterously folded silk handkerchiefs well known among the aristocracy of the West Coast. Close to the water a crowd of school children were singing hymns, their voices blending harmoniously with the musical cadences of the breaking waves.

As we approached in the small Mission rowing boat, and turned round the rock into the bay, the pleasing picture flashed into view, and the first words which fell upon my ears were, "Hold de fort for I am comin'." The children sang the first verse of that well-known hymn, then the whole crowd joined in the chorus, and the great volume of sound floated out to sea to greet us on our approach to land. They seemed to have started on the first hymn with the

intention of going through the whole book, if necessary, for when we had landed they formed themselves into a procession, escorted us to the old Mission House, and continued singing for about two hours while we had some refreshments in the closed-in veranda overlooking the crowded quadrangle of the Mission premises.

This was a welcome to Silvey and myself only, for Mr. and Mrs. Thomson, with Miss Fletcher, remained on board until all the cargo was discharged. Later on they came ashore at the other end of the town, in the new life-boat, and then the whole attention of the populace was directed to them. We were thankful for this relief, and we followed later in the cool of the evening to greet our fellow travellers and to be introduced to Miss Carrie Comber, the only sister of the three brothers whose names had become so bound up with the early history of the Congo Mission.

Quintin Thomson's house was called "Brookmount," and was situated at the extreme end of the town. It had been built by a philanthropist and scientist named George Thomson, who had come out to Africa to study the flora and fauna of the district, and to develop the idea of establishing a Sanatorium for Europeans in the Cameroon Mountains. He had built this excellent house on a rocky prominence where the stream from the mountains falls into the sea. Having failed to discover water in his exploration of the mountains, he finally gave up his project, and made a present of this house in Victoria to the Missionary Society, so that the Mission occupied two positions in the town. The Church and School buildings were the property of the Christian community, and were situated about the centre.

So we forgathered at "Brookmount" for our

evening meal, and spent the first evening together. Miss Comber had prepared an elaborate dinner to welcome us, and her kind thought was much appreciated. Later, Silvey and I returned with Dixon and settled down for the present as his guests. The long expected day had come and ended. It had been full of excitement and new experiences, in some respects very agreeably disappointing, yet I felt that at last I had come into real touch with my life's work, and was very happy.

Who can describe his first night in Tropical Africa? We had watched with wonder and awe the glorious sun setting behind the sea between the Pirate Rocks, its golden rays reflected from island to island, and the vast green forest tinted with all the hues of the rainbow. We noticed its effect inland as the afterglow vanished from one peak after another, and finally for a few brief moments the summit of the great mountain itself shone out above the darkness in its full glory, challenging the dwellers of the valley to lift up their eyes to the hills of God. Then darkness fell upon us suddenly, and we realised that nature had let loose the myriad insects of the night, and the forest became full of hissing noises such as I had never heard before. I tried to stop my ears to escape the din, but nothing could give me ease from this insistence of the forces of darkness until at last the excitement of the day had produced such bodily weariness that I fell asleep. Nor did I wake until a large bell just outside my bedroom window called us for prayers at six in the morning.

Mr. Dixon had been accepted two years before for school work, and sent to this beautiful town. His wife had come with him, but she could not stand the place or climate and had returned to England a month

after landing. He was now returning after two years' fruitful service, and Silvey or myself was to take his place. Our location was left by the London Committee to the discretion of Mr. Thomson, who was then the leader of the West African Mission. One of us was to go to Bethel Station on the Cameroons River, and the other to remain at Victoria.

Cameroons is the Portuguese word for prawns, and the name was first applied to the river by the early navigators because of the extraordinary quantity of prawns they discovered in it. It is the River of Prawns. Later the range of mountains in the distance across the Mungo River became known by the same name, although the natives call the highest peak Mongo ma Loba—the "Mountain of God," and the country on both banks of the Cameroons River is known as Duala.

Mr. Thomson, being a wary Scotsman, took a month to decide which of us was to go to Duala. The character of the work at these two stations varied considerably, and no doubt he found difficulty in deciding on the personal qualifications of the two youngsters—the Englishman and the Welshman. At Victoria he required a man to combine the offices of preacher, schoolmaster and magistrate's clerk, while at Cameroons a schoolmaster was needed to take charge of the proposed new High School. Bethel had already a well-qualified native pastor who relieved the missionary of most of the church work. Finally, as Silvey was a schoolmaster by profession, it was decided to send him to the Cameroons, and I was installed in my varied duties at Victoria.

Quintin Thomson, as superintendent, divided his time equally between Victoria and Cameroons, making a fortnightly journey in the small life-boat which he

had brought with him from England. I confess to considerable nervousness at first when I discovered that I had to take charge of all the services, in addition to my school-teaching through the week. Also I found that it was my duty every Saturday to attend the native court and take down all the cases, and keep a full record of fines and punishments—truly a new experience for a young missionary.

Quintin Thomson was a strong character, and in general was considered hard and unapproachable, but my experience of him was quite the reverse. It took me some time to understand him : he trusted me entirely, and did not interfere in every little matter ; he also gave me ample scope to develop my own ideas as to the conduct of the work. It was natural that I should occasionally make blunders, and jump hastily to conclusions, yet Mr. Thomson never let me down. He treated me as if I were in sole charge of the work at Victoria, and this encouraged me. An unsympathetic senior brother at that time might have ruined my whole missionary career.

The daily life of a missionary is generally full and exacting. It was so in my case, and there was nobody to take any of the work off my shoulders, even if I had wished it. One soon gets into regular habits in the tropics. The sun sets a good example in regularity. All the year round it rises practically at six o'clock, and sets at the same hour in the evening. There is no time to dawdle in the twilight, for half an hour after sunset it is quite dark. The " six to six " rule dominates everything in this land. The rays of the sun first strike the summit of the great mountain behind the quiet and sleeping township, then streams of light rush at a tangent down the Little Cameroons and the lesser peaks, and dive into

the shady streets just as the clock strikes six : simultaneously the clanging bell by the side of the old Mission House makes further sleep impossible. There is an uncanny connection between that bell and the great orb in the heavens. King Sol seems to strike the earth with his foot at regular intervals on his daily course, and the bell responds to the shock ! We rush from one duty to another at the call of the bell until the sun sets again at six o'clock, and peace comes once more. Twice in each week this special bell rang after sunset for an Inquirers' Class, and I felt quite important on these occasions, for it would not speak until I sent a boy to pull the rope. Oh ! that Mission bell ! How it made punctual men of some of us !

Sunday was a day of real pleasure to me, for I thoroughly enjoyed preaching to these responsive negroes. They attended the services for the sheer delight of listening to the preaching, and singing their melodies. The language spoken was " pidgin " English, which has a special charm of its own, but is quite unfit to express deep religious thought.

The inhabitants of Victoria had come over from the island of Fernando Po with Alfred Saker. Originally they were liberated slaves rescued by the British gunboats in their work of suppressing the slave trade in West Africa. Many were landed on the island of Fernando Po, and the English language became the *lingua franca* of these folk, who had emanated from different negro tribes. It was among these people that Alfred Saker and some forty odd negro Christians from Jamaica settled, in 1840, and established the West African Baptist Mission.

When the Spaniards re-occupied the island severe restrictions were placed on the community, and the

subsequent persecutions became intolerable. Saker conceived the plan of moving away into the mainland, to seek a place where these simple Christians could settle and worship God in their own way. After some exploration of the country at the base of the Cameroon mountain he discovered a quiet and sheltered bay that no traveller had seen before, and this Ambas Bay became the new home for the Mission. Saker negotiated with the native King of Bimbia for a stretch of coast including the whole bay and several islands. Bush clearing was soon started, the plots of ground measured and staked, and the township was established. The men from Fernando Po, who were mostly artisans, built their own homes. When the houses were ready they sent for their families, and settled down in this new home. The land, consisting of ten miles of coast and reaching five miles inland, became the property of the Baptist Missionary Society, and was named Victoria after the Queen of England.

The midget colony was placed under British protection, but the government had to be carried on by the Mission, and the Missionary-in-Charge was the Governor. This was not an ideal state of affairs, for the union of Church and State does not find favour with Baptists. Saker would have passed it over to the Government at the beginning, but the Foreign Office refused. So the missionaries had to govern for the time being. A Court of Justice was set up, composed of a dozen negro leaders of the township. The Chairman, Samuel Brew, was a fine character, a man greatly respected by all. He acted as agent of a German Trading Company, and was in charge of the local factory. Every Saturday he was in his place at the tribunal. All evil-doers respected him,

for they knew that "Daddy Brew" had a summary way of dispensing justice. For ordinary breaches of the law fines were imposed, as money was needed for the treasury, but for flagrant offences he depended on the corrective powers of a heavy strap, which he always displayed on the table as a warning to those who were brought up before him. As the cases were disposed of, I had to make detailed notes—so many fines and so many strokes.

The execution of the sentence took place in the yard at the back of the Court after the Court had finished its ordinary business. Daddy Brew and most members of the tribunal sat in state to see the thing done. Only once did I witness one of these performances. It was a serious offence, and "Daddy" announced that he was going to do the execution himself. The offender was one of his own family, and he knew that the "Constable," who was also jailor and executioner of the law, would let him off too easily if left to himself. So justice demanded an even hand, and the offender got it. Next morning I preached in the chapel, and felt great difficulty in giving my message, for I kept watching the young man of the previous day shifting his body into different positions in order to sit more comfortably on the bare wooden bench. He had not dared to absent himself, for Daddy Brew's eyes were like those of an eagle.

I must say a word here about the "officer" mentioned above, who, in his way, was the most important man in the little colony—Mamoa the Constable. His uniform was an old soldier's trousers, a postman's coat and buttons, with a straw hat on his head, and he always walked barefooted. Like most short men, he had a way of forcing out his chest, and went about

as if he were the master of the universe. He had some reason for this, as he was the only policeman in the colony. A Bakwili man—one of the backwood original tribes—he was very much looked down upon by the aristocratic inhabitants of the town colony. This was one reason why he was appointed to the office, for a Victoria gentleman could not condescend to be a common servant. Mamoa, however, rejoiced in the dignity of his office because it provided him with an opportunity of emptying the vials of his wrath on the children of the proud "freemen" who occupied the bungalows in the streets. One of his duties was to come to the school every morning, a quarter of an hour after opening, and obtain from me a list of absent pupils, if any. Then he would set out for the culprits. It was not always easy to capture the delinquents, for the lads had many hiding places, but it was wonderful what true zeal for the cause, coupled with the dignity of his position, could do. Before the morning was over Mamoa brought them to school singly. He never failed to choose the most public way to reach the school, and would lead his prisoner by the ear, and the more the boy squealed, as they passed through the streets, the greater was Mamoa's delight. Finally, he would literally throw him through the door into the middle of the school, and pointing to the victim with his wand of office would shout triumphantly, "Dat'll teach you not to lemme toot you to school to-morrow, ma beauty boy."

He and I were good friends, for he knew that I sympathised with his tribal feelings. He was never happier than when he had to fetch a child of one of the "gentlemen of the town." These little ones had to suffer vicariously for the pride of their parents.

But to me the most interesting person in this heterogeneous population was Mammy Johnson. She and her husband Sam had come over in the *Chilmark* from Jamaica with Saker, and from the beginning had made it her business in life to care for the missionaries. She lived for them. No danger of any lady missionary getting sunstroke when Mammy was about—she always followed close behind with a big umbrella ! She did not give such personal devotion to the men as she did to the ladies, but she ordered us about as if we were children, and we learned to obey her. She was at all the services, and attended school, nominally to teach the infants their alphabet, but really to attend to the needs of the lady missionary teacher.

She was extremely particular about the doctrine in our sermons, and always had some remarks to make to us afterwards. " Massa, what for you talk dem words about de Holy Spirit dis morning ? " Or, " Massa, you no fit talk dem fashion 'bout de great 'postle Paul big words." Often she chuckled with approval when she had something to her liking : " But ole Mammy Johnson do praise God for de truth you put in her heart dis morning." She was always finding some excuse to follow the preacher and talk about the " discourse " on the way from the chapel. Pity that we do not have in our land friends of a similar type to encourage us in our preaching ! Mammy was an inspiration to me in those early days, and I still have vivid visions of her as she hopped along. Soon she had dropped the title " Massa " and changed it into " Ma boy," and I was proud of the change.

The care and attention she bestowed on Miss Fletcher, who lived at " Brookmount " with the Thomsons, was highly amusing. The Boys' School

was situated near the chapel where the Girls' School was held daily. Mammy Johnson had the infants together in the chapel vestry. Every morning, as soon as the first bell rang for school, Mammy set out for "Brookmount." When Miss Fletcher appeared at the door she was there waiting, and with a curtsey and "Goo' mornin', Ma," the old lady fell behind her teacher and followed closely until she was inside the school. When school was again dismissed at noon, Mammy was in close attendance to the door of the house. "Ole Mammy" was a shrewd woman, and understood human nature as well as the Grace of God. I was fully convinced in my mind that this good old negress had conceived the idea that it was not good or safe for a young missionary like myself to associate or hold converse alone with a good-looking woman like her lady missionary. Fortunately for her the young man lived in the opposite direction from "Brookmount," and in the ordinary way our paths never met ; this was no small satisfaction to her. She did not know in those days that I was engaged to be married to another. Even if she had known, I do not think she would have slackened her vigilance. Her behaviour was supremely correct and charming. Thus came Mrs. Grundy to Victoria !

But very early in my missionary life troubles and trials began to pour into our little band from various directions. About four weeks after landing, an open boat appeared in the bay, with Miss Saker and John Shred from the Cameroons. They had come to visit the Thomsons, for Miss Saker and Mrs. Thomson were sisters. Shred was the missionary at Bell Town, and intended to go home on his first furlough in a few months' time. He was in fever when he arrived at Victoria, and this developed into

dysentery. Continued fevers had undermined his constitution, and he had no strength to withstand such a malady. Within a week he died.

Mr. Silvey at the time was in bed in my house with his first fever. Quintin Thomson had a good medical experience, and devoted himself to Mr. Shred with all his skill and strength ; but immediately after Shred passed away, Thomson himself retired with a high temperature, and I was left alone to bury our good brother in the cemetery behind the town.

It was my first funeral in Africa, and I was the only white man present. John Shred was a north country-man, and had already proved himself to be an excellent missionary. He had developed the work at the town of King Bell. He had already built a commodious grass chapel, and had commenced building a new Mission House there. No doubt this hard work and the exposure to the tropical sun were responsible for his breakdown and death.

The morning after the funeral I had myself to retire with my first attack of malarial fever, and the world did not seem very bright just then. Silvey had recovered sufficiently to attend to me, and after four days I came out, but as weak as a mouse. Everything had come with bewildering rapidity. To add to my troubles, I found on arrival in Africa that I had to go through my first fever with only a rug and dressing-gown to cover me, for a large case containing my blankets and house linen had been left in the docks at Liverpool, and it took three months to get them. Afterwards I was able to borrow blankets until my own arrived.

By this time Miss Comber had gone to England on furlough. The death of our comrade Shred and his own subsequent illness delayed Mr. Thomson in his

plans, but in about another fortnight he was able to go to the Cameroons, taking with him Miss Saker and Mr. Silvey. I was left the sole occupant of the old Mission House, and the only other white people in Victoria were Mrs. Thomson and Miss Fletcher, who lived at the other end of the town. But the time did not hang heavily on my hands. That bell kept me going, and between school work and the preaching there was not much opportunity to think of loneliness. Besides, I had come to love the work, and looked forward from one day to the other with eagerness.

At Duala, in the Cameroons, there were important developments on foot, such as a new school at Bethel, a dwelling-house at Bell Town, and the enlargement of Jackson Fuller's house at Hickory. I had not yet met Fuller : he had gone home to England on furlough. All this kept Quintin Thomson busy at that end, and much more than half his time was spent away from Victoria. Thus the responsibility of the Station was practically on my shoulders. The only part I disliked was the civil administration, and I mixed in that as little as I could. But even this had one bright spot in it. On the arrival of a British man-of-war in the bay it was my duty to board the vessel and report to the Commanding Officer. If more than one ship came (and there were generally more) I had to visit the flagship. The officers of these British ships were delightful men, and it was both a pleasure and an education to meet them. The officer or the Consul would examine the Court books which I carried to them, and listen to all I had to report. Perhaps they would stay at anchor a day or two ; in that case we would receive visits ashore and have a very good time together.

CHAPTER VII

My First Christmas in Africa

Until I went abroad I did not realise what Christmas Day means to an Englishman away from home. No matter how far he goes or how few his companions, he always keeps Christmas. The young trading clerk in his lonely bush station looks forward eagerly to it, and when the long-expected day arrives he sits down at a table made of a packing-case to enjoy the plum pudding sent to him by his loving mother in the homeland. He pictures the family gathering in the old home, talking about him and wondering whether the pudding has reached him in time for the day. With a tear in his eye, he meditates on the old folks at home, and his heart is glad, for with the pudding there came a note saying that "Dolly" would spend Christmas Day with them! And Dolly's letter, too, has been read over and over again!

Only those who have travelled this way can really and fully understand, but in Africa this feeling about Christmas is universal. Even the Scotsman discards his New Year's Day festivities in favour of the English holiday. All are of one mind.

Christmas Day had never been in much favour in my village. We had lived peacefully under the Old Calendar, and "Twelfth-night" had much more significance to us (the village has been won over to modern habits since then), but I caught the fever from the rest. As early as June the ladies at "Brook-

mount" were talking about the plum puddings which their friends were sending out from England, and having been bitten by the special insect that carries this infection I wrote home imploring my people to make me one and send it as soon as possible. It was not their fault that it did not arrive until the following April, or that it was dispatched in an ordinary basin covered with cloth instead of being hermetically soldered down in a tin. Not only was it useless, but it had also spoilt several articles of clothing packed in the same case. But the non-arrival of my pudding was not allowed to mar our festivities, for I was invited to share with the others, though I would be robbed of the thrill of eating a plum pudding made with the hands I loved most.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomson invited us all to spend Christmas Day with them, and they were kind enough to ask Mr. Silvey to come from Duala to spend his holidays with us and have a sort of reunion. All was carefully and thoughtfully arranged. Quintin Thomson had gone to Cameroons about the first of the month, and was returning a week before Christmas Day with Mr. Silvey. At daybreak on the appointed day the Mission boat turned Farm Point and we rushed to the beach to welcome our friends. Mr. Silvey had come, but Quintin Thomson himself looked ill, and we were told that he had been in fever all through the night. He excused himself and retired to his bed. Nothing was thought of this, for it was a very common thing after fatigue, and the swampy character of the creeks between Bimbia and the Cameroons river greatly aggravated matters.

Next day we found that the rest which he had hoped for during the night had not come to him, but still no one took a serious view of the case. He had always

doctored himself, and was quite an experienced hand at the job. A day or two in bed would cure him, we thought. However, next day he became worse, and as Mrs. Thomson was worn out nursing him, I left Silvey and took charge of the sick-room, to be with the patient night and day. On Christmas Day he was very low, and the fever increased in spite of all treatment. Before the day was over he had given up all hope of recovery, but his one concern was to discuss plans for the work after he was gone.

I tried to keep him quiet, but he would continue with his instructions. He insisted on my bringing him the Station Account Books, and went through them with me. One could see that his mind had begun to wander, and I hid the books from him. Delirium set in, and it became increasingly difficult to get him to take nourishment. Next day the fever increased in intensity, and he became violent in his delirium. It required a strong man to keep him in bed. This continued for three days, and on the fourth day after Christmas came the collapse. He had worn himself out, and finally passed away quietly with his hand in that of his wife. The following day, in the cool of the evening (28th December, 1883), we laid him to rest in the cemetery, by the side of John Shred.

My first Christmas in Africa had passed.

Quintin Thomson was a great man in his way, and his death was a serious loss. He had come out from England only ten months before to take up the leadership of the Mission in succession to his father-in-law, Alfred Saker. His plans were well matured for an advance, especially in educational work. Lady missionaries had already been appointed for girls' schools at both centres, while Mr. Silvey and myself were accepted for the same purpose among the boys. He

had planned all the details and had looked well into the future. But he had not foreseen such an early grave for himself. Yet even in this he had carefully made provision.

In the Barter store-room at "Brookmount," I had become quite familiar with a brown tin trunk, about six feet long and fifteen inches wide and deep, in which were kept the loose cotton goods for barter. It was in constant use, and I thought it was an admirable arrangement, for there was plenty of room in it to turn things over. I think it was the day after Christmas, after talking to me about the conduct of the Mission and intimating that he could not live many days longer, that he remarked that the coffin for his burial was ready, and that I would find it in the Barter-room. I thought that his mind was wandering again, and took no notice until he continued his talk and said it was the long tin trunk where the cotton goods were kept. "Put my body in that box," he said; "it is my coffin." I still imagined that he was in a sort of delirium, but when he had passed away his wife told me that it was his real intention. It was an index to his character—always precise and prepared.

A few days after the funeral, Silvey returned to the Cameroons with the news, Miss Saker hastened to Victoria to her sister, and it was arranged for Mrs. Thomson and Miss Fletcher to go to Duala for a change. These three ladies, with Mr. Silvey and myself, were the only missionaries on the field, with J. J. Fuller and Miss Comber at home. As Mr. Silvey knew nothing about building, I undertook the task of superintending the construction of the new bungalow at Bell Town and also the re-roofing of the buildings at Hickory Station. This necessitated my journeying between Victoria and Duala about

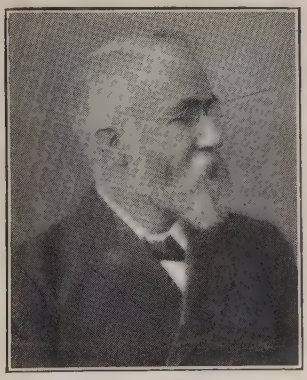
once a week, for I could not leave Victoria for long without any European. The assistant teacher and pastor, Stephen Burnley, was a trustworthy man, and Mr. Brew was well able to look after "the government."

All went well till about the middle of March, when I had just completed the chief building operations. Mrs. Thomson and Miss Fletcher were coming back with me to Victoria, and we started from Bethel beach one morning before daybreak. I had not told them that I had a temperature until we were well down stream. When we turned our little boat into the creek I could disguise it no longer. I had never been in such agonies. I was in for a severe attack of dysentery. How we made that journey to Victoria I cannot say. I remember arriving at Bimbia after dark that night, with the sea so rough that we could not possibly proceed on our journey. A German trader, who was a good friend of the mission, gave up his bedroom for the use of the ladies, while he and I occupied the store. We started very early in the morning and arrived at Victoria before breakfast-time. I went straight to bed. Fortunately for me the two ladies were there to look after me, and I have always felt grateful for their ministrations then. It was my first real illness, and God in His providence had not forgotten me.

Two days after returning I was told that two British men-of-war had anchored in the bay. Mrs. Thomson had dispatched our handy man in the boat with a note to the Commander to say that Mr. Lewis was ill. In the true naval way the Commander himself came ashore immediately, and brought the Senior Medical Officer with him. Having seen me, he sent back to his assistant for medicine, and when next morning

the Doctor came again I was feeling much better. We chatted for some time, and then he asked me if I came from Wales. On my replying in the affirmative, he said that he also was a Welshman and that his name was Powell. That made me several degrees better at once. He said his orders were to see me on the safe road to recovery ; that the squadron would stay at Victoria till I was fit to be left, and that with care I would then be all right. Next day he left me instructions and sufficient medicine to carry me through, and definitely advised me to take a short sea voyage as soon as possible ; but I did not see how this was possible just then.

A week later my friend, Dr. Allen, from Duala, arrived. He was a good Christian trader who had taken up medicine as a hobby, and he was kindness personified to all the missionaries. He had heard of my illness and had set off immediately to my assistance. I began to feel guilty in that I had recovered sufficiently to walk about before he arrived. Then a few days later an English steamer was sighted coming straight facing us from Fernando Po. It turned out to be the *Nubia*, with Captain Davies in command. He was a well-known character, a rabid teetotaller, and a favourite among missionaries. A great personal friend of Alfred Saker, he had called with passengers at Fernando Po and had heard of the death of Quintin Thomson. There was no other way of communication, and he had therefore come in purposely to get Mrs. Thomson on board to go home with him. He was on his outward voyage to Congo and Loanda, and would be away five weeks. Two Calabar ladies of the Presbyterian Mission were already on board going for the round trip. Mrs. Thomson could not go at once, but she promised to get all her goods in



GEORGE GRENFELL.

THOMAS COMBER.

ALFRED SAKER.

J. LAWSON FORFEITT.

JOSEPH JACKSON FULLER.

W. HOLMAN BENTLEY.

JOHN H. WEEKS.

SOME OF THE MEN OF CAMEROONS AND CONGO.

Facing page 64

readiness to travel home to England with him on his return.

Then Dr. Allen insisted on my taking the voyage to Loanda in the *Nubia*. I was loath to do this, for I did not want to leave the ladies by themselves. However, I was out-voted, and as we had news that Miss Comber would arrive in a week or two, I agreed to go. I am very glad now that this was insisted upon, for dysentery is a disease very liable to return and become chronic. More than one of my friends discovered that to their cost. Chiefly owing to this timely trip I have never been troubled in the same way since.

Besides the matter of health, this journey gave me the opportunity of seeing the South Coast and other Missions at work. My first visit was to the American Presbyterians at Gabun, where we spent two nights ashore in the Mission while the ship discharged cargo. I missed Dr. Nassau by a week or two, for he had gone up river, but I saw a good bit of the excellent work of that Mission, though it was considerably crippled by the restrictions of the French Government. The missionaries had to teach in all their schools in the French language and also conduct their preaching services in the official language. Hitherto they had prosecuted their work in the vernacular.

The next place of interest was the Congo River. I had been quite excited about getting into the Congo, and wondered whether I could obtain any news of our missionaries who had recently settled there, though I knew our first station was a hundred miles inland, and no ocean steamers went up river then. When the agent of the Dutch Trading House came off in his beautifully-polished boat we noticed that there were two Englishmen among the party, and they

turned out to be our missionaries, Ross and Whitley. The *Nubia* had a large cargo to discharge for the Dutch Trading House, and we lay in Banana Creek for three days, and had a long time with our friends. Ross's health had broken down, and soon afterwards he returned to England and entered the Home Ministry, held pastorates at Stoke Newington and Newport, and, later, went to America.

Reaching St. Paul de Loanda, we had come to a town with large stone buildings, including several churches, quite different from anything else on the coast. Going ashore, one realised that it was a penal settlement, for one met everywhere, guarded by their gaolers, prisoners from Portugal working at the roads and in the port. It looked a horrible and depressing place in which to live. In company with a Spaniard from Fernando Po, who was a fellow passenger, I saw nearly everything there was to be seen. It was Good Friday morning when we arrived, and the city was *en fête*.

Early in the morning, at a given signal, a sound of the beating of sticks came from all the ships in the harbour, and I was told this was the Catholic custom on every Good Friday to hunt the betrayer of Christ and "crack old Judas's bones," to show their disapproval of his evil deed. Having done their duty in this way at an early hour, they felt more at ease to commit the same sin themselves during the rest of the day.

We had lunch at some restaurant, and I shall never forget the stuff offered us—my first acquaintance with Portuguese cookery. Since then I have become quite accustomed to it, and can digest oil and garlic as well as any of them. I did not go ashore on the second day, for I was anxious not to undo the good

of the voyage by over-exposure to the sun, and Loanda is a hot place.

This was the farthest point south that we reached, and the ship on the return journey called at every little port along the coast, taking in ebony and palm oil. The whole trip took us five weeks. On the return voyage we again called at the Mission in Gabun, and to my utter surprise I found Miss Saker from the Cameroons sitting on the veranda. The missionary who had come to fetch us ashore had kept this as a surprise. She was able to give me news from Cameroons.

Two more days brought us to Victoria, where the first news was that Miss Fletcher had been ill. Miss Carrie Comber and Miss Gwen Thomas, a new lady missionary, had arrived safely three weeks before, and I learned how, on the evening of their arrival, when they were sleeping in "Brookmount," a terrific tornado had blown off the roof and carried parts of it some hundred yards to the back of the town. The ladies had had to take refuge through the flood in the old house where Mrs. Thomson and Miss Fletcher had lived for two months.

It had been a series of catastrophes, for when they had landed earlier in the day from the English steamer in the Captain's gig, the boat had capsized, and they had had to struggle ashore the best they could. The mail bags and handbags were recovered the day after. It was a very unfortunate affair altogether and might have been attended by serious consequences to their health, but with the exception of a good soaking and the loss of a few trinkets no untoward effect followed. These two ladies had gone to Duala to carry on the work in the absence of Miss Saker.

We had hurriedly to consider the health of Miss Fletcher. She was evidently much run down, and all felt that the best course for her was to go home to England with Mrs. Thomson and get a thorough rest and change. They had already acted on this possibility, for the packing was nearly complete, and late in the afternoon the ladies were taken on board the *Nubia*, and Miss Saker, who had travelled from Gabun with us, accompanied her sister, intending to come back by the next steamer from Bonny, due in a few days. But, alas, her first landing place was Madeira, and we did not see her in Cameroons until three or four months later !

As I pen these remarks I wonder how I am alive to tell the tale. We did such irrational things in those days. We were not taught to take precautions for our health, except perhaps not to expose oneself too much to the midday sun. There was not a mosquito net in the whole Mission. Dr. Ross had not then told us that the mosquito was responsible for the spread of malaria, but the mosquitoes had us all right. The only medicine we were told to bring with us was quinine, and that was to be used *very* sparingly. Neither Silvey nor I owned a clinical thermometer ! I had never seen one until I settled at Duala and became the pupil of Dr. Allen.

There was a story of one of our Cameroon negro missionaries, who was very ill with fever, sending to another station for help, pleading, "that his temperature was up to 75 degrees." When asked how he took his temperature it was discovered that he had a garden thermometer in a wooden frame, and had placed it under his arm outside his dressing-gown ! Ah, well ! We all went out in *faith* in those days, certainly not with *knowledge*.

CHAPTER VIII

Germany Annexes Cameroons

The first few years of my missionary life coincided with the mad rush of European powers for the partition of Africa. Emissaries of governments moved about in mysterious ways and by divers routes, visiting African chiefs and negotiating treaties with them, with a view to securing a foothold for their respective governments on the shores of the Dark Continent, that they might claim the hinterland for their own. One got tired of hearing about "hinterlands" and "spheres of influence" in this race for the territory of the black man. Engineers on board the coasting vessels were kept busy cutting tin sheets and making them into gaudy crowns for the heads of the deluded chiefs who were ready to sign away their territory for a few bottles of gin and the title of "king."

About this time two Polish travellers arrived at Victoria to make a "scientific survey" of the Cameroon Mountain, and they made many treaties, which they professed to obtain for the British. The leader was a very pleasant and jovial man called Rogazinski, or as the English-speaking Victorians wittily named him, "Rogue-Gin-and-Whisky." He settled on Mundoleh Island, which was then the property of the Mission, but later on he got into trouble with the Germans and moved for safety to Fernando Po. For some reason, he had a great hatred of Germans. He worried a great deal about the "ridiculous law"

of the township prohibiting the importation of spirituous liquors "except for medicinal purposes," and no doubt he chose the uninhabited island for his place of residence because it was more convenient for him to treat the crowds of "sick people" who went to him from the mainland to get the necessary medicine for their numerous diseases.

However, as far as Cameroons was concerned, we considered the whole land as under British protection, and were persuaded that the possession of it would never be contested. The Cameroons River was governed by a Court of Duala Chiefs, British traders, and two German traders; and all disputes were referred to the British Consul on the occasion of his periodical visits. Victoria was Mission property, and under British protection. Besides, the Duala tribunal had petitioned the British Government to annex the country, and the people proudly called themselves "English."

Consul Hewitt went home on furlough, and in the early months of 1884 had instructions to take over the Cameroons and arrange for its government; but when he arrived, in July, he found that he was nearly a week too late. Two well-known German explorers, Dr. Nachtigal and Dr. Buchner, had arrived at Duala from the South, and were staying at the Woermann Factory in Akwa Town. They were "noted scientists," to be received with honour by all, and only their fellow countrymen suspected that there was anything in the way of a political *coup* to be enacted. But one morning the Imperial Flag of Germany was hoisted with due ceremony, and merchants and missionaries were notified that, acting on behalf of the Imperial Government, Dr. Nachtigal

had taken over the Cameroons to be a German Colony. It was almost incredible, yet lamentably true.

My friend Silvey dispatched a boat with letters to Victoria, informing me of this development of affairs. It transpired that the German explorer, with the assistance of Herr Edward Schmidt, the chief agent of the Woermann firm, had induced King Bell to cede his country to Germany. Avarice and greed have been the undoing of many a man before King Bell, and in his case he paid dearly for his treachery. His people rose against him, and feelings were so strong among the Dualas that he and his family considered it wise to seek refuge for a time in the bush.

It was on the day after the arrival of the news at Victoria that four British men-of-war steamed into the bay. I went out in the Mission boat and steered for the flagship, which I boarded. I was received by the Commander and Consul Hewitt, and the latter told me that they had come to take over Victoria and Cameroons in the name of the British Government. When I informed him that the German flag had already been hoisted in the Cameroons, he was greatly perturbed and chagrined, and could hardly believe it. However, instead of coming ashore to hoist the flag at Victoria, he gave me some proclamations to fix on a public place, and orders were given to weigh anchor for the Cameroons River, to see what had happened. As they neared Duala, they found the German flag flying proudly on the beach, and Dr. Nachtigal received them with a *fait accompli*. After an interview with the British residents, and lodging a protest against the action of the Germans, the whole matter was referred to their respective governments at home, and next day the four ships returned to Victoria.

There, as may be supposed, there was little enthusiasm over the taking formal possession of that little strip of land, with only ten miles of coast and a small township. The British officers went through the ceremony of hoisting the flag, which was duly saluted by a firing squad brought ashore with them. When this was done, the Consul and officers returned to their ships, and an hour later the flagship dipped her flag as a parting salute to this youngest and smallest colony.

About six weeks before this episode (21st May), our Mission staff at Victoria had been augmented by the arrival of two new missionaries, R. Wright Hay and John Pinnock. Unfortunately Wright Hay was laid up with his first fever when the squadron arrived, and he was deprived of all the excitement of the annexation ceremonies. He had come to take charge of Victoria and the country at the foot of the mountain, thus setting me free to take up my abode at Bell Town, where there had not been a resident missionary since the death of John Shred. For some months I had to give a helping hand at Victoria, which necessitated my making the boat journey every fortnight, and I was glad when towards the month of October I occupied the newly-built bungalow on the promontory jutting out into the river from Bell Town in the Cameroons. It was generally spoken of as Joss Point, and was considered the finest site in the district, commanding as it did a clear view of the river down to the bar.

In those days the merchants lived mostly on their ships in midstream, and all trade was transacted on these " hulks," as they were called. Merchants from Bristol and Liverpool came out in their sailing vessels to the West Coast and dropped anchor in convenient

rivers. The masts were stripped of their sails and a temporary roof was put on, either of corrugated iron or African thatch. Convenient living rooms were erected on the upper deck, while the lower decks were reserved for trading purposes. From noon to night native canoes crowded around with palm oil and kernels, and then paddled away with the white man's goods to their homes in the various branches and creeks of the river. There were six of these floating establishments when I settled at Bell Town, and the river presented a pretty sight. Some traders had established themselves on the beach. The Woermann firm had no "hulk," but had two well-built establishments at Akwa Town and Bell Town.

Unfortunately for the future of the Mission, political events developed rapidly. Soon after the hoisting of the German flag, King Bell found the feeling against him growing, and he and his people moved away into the Mungo creeks until the storm of indignation should pass away, so that I found myself in an empty town. We had no doubt but that the people would return, and consequently we proceeded with the building of the Mission. Bethel Station was only about a mile higher up the river, and I visited the friends there several times in the week, so I was not altogether isolated. Joss Town adjoined that of King Bell, but as the Joss clan were enemies of the King, they would not attend our services. They did not mind my visiting them and preaching in their town, but they would not come to us, and therefore school work was almost at a standstill.

In the early days of December news came that King Bell had captured in the bush a Hickory Town

man, and that he had been killed. Hickory was on the opposite side of the river, and the people, who were of the same family and clan as those at Joss, were so infuriated that they proceeded to burn down the King's houses, and never rested until every house in the town had been destroyed. This was accomplished in an incredibly short time, and I feared that our small grass buildings would catch fire too.

The Germans had not established any government as yet, and Dr. Nachtigal had left on some other mission, leaving Dr. Buchner as Consul in charge. He was well liked, and we were quite friendly, and hardly a day passed without his paying me a visit. It never crossed my mind that he had any ulterior motive in cultivating my friendship, and even now I do not think unkindly of those pleasant visits to my bungalow at Bell Town. Yet I know that he learnt much about the locality and the movements of the Joss Town people in his wanderings. The Friday before Christmas Day, he spent several hours down my way, and I remember that on that morning all the flags were floating over the "ships," for there were two men-of-war at anchor outside the bar, and naturally there was great excitement. Dr. Buchner told me they were German gunboats, and were too big to come up river, but he expected some news next morning. About ten o'clock next morning we saw two small river steamers, that had gone down the day before, returning, accompanied by about a dozen boats filled with German soldiers. Of course, when they came opposite all the British and German flags dipped in salute. We wondered as the procession passed Bell Town and again Akwa Town, but were not kept long in suspense, for when they arrived

opposite Hickory Town they suddenly opened fire on some fishing canoes, and killed several men. It was now clear that they had come to punish the people who had destroyed the town of King Bell and objected to the German occupation. The Germans then landed a force of soldiers to burn the town, and Bell's people came and were permitted to plunder the houses.

Silvey saw everything from Bethel, which is situated just opposite, and he immediately crossed in the Mission boat to Fuller's model Mission Station. He managed to get the Mission women and children into the Mission House, and the Commander of the forces gave him a soldier to protect them, for the Bell Town people in their blind fury and love of revenge were getting out of hand. In spite of the Commander and King Bell, who had warned the people not to destroy the Mission buildings, it was not many minutes before everything was ablaze, and Fuller's beautiful chapel became a mass of ruins. Only the bungalow was saved, and that because it had iron roofing. Silvey rescued about fifty of our Mission people, and later on borrowed a surf-boat from Dr. Allen to transport them to Bethel Station.

In the meantime the soldiers had returned to mete out justice to the poor people on the South bank, and made straight for Bell Town beach. The Joss Town folk, earlier in the day, when they saw the firing on Hickory Town, rushed down to the Woermann factory, seized the chief man in charge, and carried him into their town as hostage, promising that he would be all right if the Germans did not burn their town or kill their people. There was a thicket of wood just outside our Station ground, and Joss had a shooting party concealed in it. It was about

fifty feet above the water, and commanded the whole of the cove. When the German boats touched ground, and the soldiers were landing, they were greeted with a shower of bullets from the wood, but instead of rushing the narrow path up the cliff to where the natives were, they moved up to the factory and got on level ground. I had seen this from my vantage ground on the back veranda of my house, but when the soldiers reached the upper ground the bullets from the German guns came whizzing through the woods into our Mission ground. The three native boys and myself turned all the tables we had on their sides, and hastily pulled the bed mattress against them for better protection, lying flat on the floor behind the improvised barricade. For about half an hour (it seemed more like half a day) the bullets passed through our wooden bungalow as if it were a matchbox, and the noise was deafening.

The house was riddled with bullet holes, but fortunately none struck low enough to touch us. Then there came a lull, and the firing ceased. I naturally thought the fighting was over, and got out to see whether we could somehow make our escape. The soldiers were still in the same place, and were waiting for reinforcements. I decided to seek a safer place, so the three lads and myself crept out stealthily and made for the riverside. We kept our heads down as low as possible, and finally reached the beach just as the second lot of soldiers were landing. I passed right through the ranks, and took my hat off to the party of officers who were chatting together. With them were my friend, Dr. Buchner, and the German trader, whom I also knew very well. They acknowledged my salute, and I walked along the beach until I

reached Bethel. Silvey was still away at Hickory, but the others, whom my non-appearance had made very anxious, were greatly relieved to find me alive.

Before I was half-way up to Bethel the fighting had recommenced, but it was a one-sided affair, for the natives had run away into the bush behind, carrying their German captive with them. Joss, their chief, had fallen early in the struggle, and his party in the wood had been practically annihilated. When this became known, the people murdered the German agent at the back of the town, and then fled into the bush ; and the German soldiers found nothing there but the body of their countryman.

Next day was Sunday, and we had our morning service as usual at Bethel. Towards midday the station was surrounded by about two hundred soldiers, and a party entered the Mission House to search for refugees. They demanded from us Green Joss, the chief of Hickory Town. As he was a Christian, and one of our leading men, they naturally thought he would be in hiding with us. But, of course, he was not there. The officers, thinking we were protecting the chief, threatened Silvey and myself with loaded revolvers, and they were specially angry with me. They found one man hiding underneath a bed in the boys' house, but he was not one of those wanted.

When the search was over, Dr. Buchner asked me to go down to Bell Town house, which they had thoroughly searched in the morning. I found my scanty possessions scattered all over the place ; my lad and I gathered them together, locked the door, and came away. They had discovered a gun, and handed it to the British Acting-Consul with a complaint against me. As it was only a single-barrel,

muzzle-loading cap gun which, in my ignorance of what guns were, I had bought, it was not much of a catch. I had never used it, and it was really only a piece of rusty iron. I found out afterwards that it served its purpose in Germany as evidence against the English missionaries as "the worst agitators against German ascendancy." A cartoon was published in one of their papers representing a bearded Baptist missionary leading the natives of Cameroons against the German forces, with a Bible in one hand and a pistol in the other. Some of the Cameroons people who afterwards saw this picture were naturally indignant.

So it came to pass that my second Christmas in Africa found me sitting on the ruins of our work, pondering over what the New Year would bring, and what the future held in store for the Cameroons Mission.

Many things have happened since then, and the old sores have been healed, but the experience was anything but pleasant at the time. For a short while we were under military rule in the Cameroons, but as far as we were concerned we had not much about which to complain. Our Mission house and property had been taken over forcibly, the German Government paying us half the value of the house, which they occupied during further building operations. Joss Point became the site of Government House, the first visible sign of the German occupation.

Before long a Civil Governor arrived in the person of Baron von Soden, a very fine and wise gentleman, who handled the situation with great skill and foresight His interest in the welfare of the natives showed itself in the system of education and Government schools he set up in Duala. Like most things

German, they were thorough. The military rule did not commend itself to many of us, but after all Africans can with advantage do with some discipline, and the government under the guidance of Baron von Soden was altogether to the good. At the time I was profoundly impressed with his fairness and wise government, and I found him very favourable to our work as missionaries. All matters in dispute between the Mission and the German Government as to property and other matters were referred to London and Berlin, though we felt that Lord Granville, as Foreign Secretary, was not strong enough a man to deal with the great Bismarck. But even that is now forgotten.

CHAPTER IX

Last Days in Cameroons

The events chronicled in the last chapter brought about rapid changes in the Mission and among the missionaries. Victoria still remained the midget colony under British rule, and the missionaries held on to the work hoping for the best. It was, however, so hemmed in on all sides except the sea by German territory that any development was impossible. Thus the isolation of the Victoria Mission became more accentuated than ever, and communication between it and the Cameroons river less frequent.

By this time Miss Comber had become the wife of R. Wright Hay, and, with Pinnock's valuable assistance, these three, in the midst of difficulties and much illness, maintained all the mission work in that district. About twelve months later the angel of death seemed to have deliberately come on a special visit to deliver his final blow at the little band of workers. Mrs. Hay gave birth to a daughter ; her case was complicated with a high fever, and in a few days she passed away, leaving her husband with a new-born babe to care for. Fortunately, there were many negro mothers at Victoria capable of helping, but the bereaved and distracted father had no choice but to leave with all haste for the homeland with his motherless child. When the news of Mrs. Hay's death reached us, the father was already on his way to England with his precious burden, and John Pinnock remained the

only worker at Victoria until the mission was taken over by the Germans.

The death of Mrs. Hay was a great loss to the work, and the Victorians ever spoke of her as "their Miss Comber." She was the first of that family to give her life a sacrifice on the altar. Her great desire had been to accompany her brother Tom to the Congo on the establishment of that Mission, but there was no room for single women there then, and Carrie did the next best thing and offered her service for the Cameroons, where her brother had also served. She was one of the brightest and happiest women I ever met. I shall always remember her in my first days at Victoria—a plump figure with large blue eyes set in an ever-smiling face, a group of school girls clinging to her arms and hanging around her neck like a string of ebony ornaments, compelling the thought that she was destined from birth to be an African Missionary to girls.

She was the last of a long list of British missionaries to be buried in this Mission Colony.

Before the German occupation, Miss Emily Saker had already been compelled to leave Duala for England, leaving Miss Gwen Thomas alone in charge of the Girls' School at Bethel. The experience of the German occupation was too much for my friend, Mr. Silvey. His nerves had been badly shaken; he was never a robust man, and early in 1885 his health was such that he was obliged to leave for England for a complete change and rest, leaving Miss Thomas and myself in sole occupation of the Duala district. This arrangement was not at all desirable, and we pressed for the immediate return of Mr. and Mrs. Fuller, who were home on furlough. Illness, however, prevented their departure, and we

were getting desperate. From January to August we waited in vain, and every mail brought fresh disappointment.

I was doubly interested in their return, inasmuch as Mr. and Mrs. Fuller were to escort out to Africa the lady who was to be my wife. Things were then so unsettled in the Cameroons that it was doubtful whether she ought to come out to be married on the field or to wait my return on furlough in another year's time. The exigencies of the situation were such that something had to be done, as it was not convenient that any single woman should remain in the field with no other white woman anywhere within reach. When, therefore, in the month of August a party of Congo missionaries, led by Tom Comber, sailed from Liverpool in a vessel calling at the West African ports, it was decided that Miss Phillips should accompany them. Cameroons was not on the list of calls, so I received instructions to meet her at Calabar. The steamer that brought the welcome news was leaving Cameroons for Calabar in two days, and, needless to say, I was a passenger on board. We called at Fernando Po on the way. It was a Sunday morning, and, landing there, I was astonished to find that the Primitive Methodist Missionary, Mr. Welford, was in prison. Obtaining permission of the Spanish Governor, I went aboard the guard-ship to visit him, and found that it was one of those petty persecutions of the Protestants by the Spaniards, which were somewhat frequent at that time. I was able to give him some cheer by the way.

We arrived at Calabar early next morning, and after a day's waiting at the Presbyterian Mission the *Lualaba* arrived with the missionary party, consisting of Tom Comber and his brother Percy, Philip Davies

Michael Richards, John Biggs, John Maynard and Miss Phillips, all on board well. How bright and happy they all were, looking forward to a long life of service on the mission field. But only two of them saw the homeland again.

The happy days spent together at Calabar Mission, and the return to Cameroons in the little trading steamer *Redland*, are of very little interest to us to-day. Mrs. Lyall, one of the lady missionaries, accompanied us, acting as chaperon to my fiancée. She was the widow of one of our missionaries at Cameroons who had died there a few years back, and she was happy at the thought of coming back to her old home and revisiting her husband's grave. There was great excitement among the Duala Christians on the arrival of their old friend Mrs. Lyall and the new "Mamma" who was to stay with them, and Bethel Station was a gay place indeed.

My friend and colleague, John Pinnock, from Victoria, came to officiate at the wedding. We decided to apply to the Governor for a marriage in accordance with German law, and as this was to be the first wedding in the new Colony, Baron von Soden was very pleased. It took a week to arrange all the legal preliminaries. When the day came we went to the Governor's house for the legal ceremony, and back to the Bethel chapel for the religious service. Two young people, like many before them, were made supremely happy in each other's love ; and the young bride entered into her service immediately, assisting Miss Thomas in her work among the girls.

They quickly won each other's heart, and became fast friends, when suddenly the cruel blow fell. My wife was taken ill with her first fever, and after three days her spirit passed away, to the

utter surprise and horror of us all. The doctor in attendance said he had never experienced anything so sudden. Our wedded life had been just three weeks of supreme happiness. Even after forty years I cannot dwell on this tragedy, but my friend, George Hawker, has written the story with great delicacy in his book, "An Englishwoman's Twenty-five Years in Tropical Africa." This was my first plunge into the depths of human sorrow, and it was inexpressibly dark.

Now the old difficulties returned with double force. We held on for about three months, expecting the arrival of our friends, the Fullers, by every boat. We heard rumours, too, that our Society was in negotiations with a German Mission to take over our work in the new German Colony, and we found it most difficult to keep all the work going. So it was decided that Miss Thomas should go home, and that I should carry on alone with the help of the native pastor and teachers until such time as Mr. and Mrs. Fuller should arrive. So we said good-bye to our last woman missionary.

Reference has been made several times in these pages to Dr. Allen, a fine Christian gentleman whose friendship I greatly valued, a qualified physician, but engaged in trade as chief agent of a British firm. He was constant in his attendance at the English service held every Sunday afternoon. After business hours he would come to the Mission for an hour or so, and he attended to our sick people, both at the dispensary and in their homes. He was a friend indeed to me during those months of loneliness. He took me out with him to see patients, and made me a sort of dresser or assistant. This gave me some degree of expertness in medical work.

Once, with John Pinnock, from Victoria, I made a boat journey up the Mungo River and visited Bakundu, our only distant station, where Comber had hoped to settle before he was called to Congo. It was quite a new experience to sleep in the open boat as it lay at anchor in the river, and it was there I had my first contact with wild elephants, which came down in herds to wash in the river at night. The noise was terrifying and the squirting of water was dangerously near as they performed their toilet. Our boys had a big fire on the beach close by, and we were assured that it would keep all elephants away. It did, and they had all disappeared before the break of dawn.

We enjoyed the fortnight's trip, and came back to Bethel Station one night when all were asleep. We made enough noise to raise the town, for we knew the lads in charge had a rare capacity for slumber. To our surprise we found the Mission House occupied by three German missionaries from Accra, and I shall never forget the ghost-like appearance of our visitors, as they appeared in flowing robes, at the back door in response to our bombardment, with flickering candles in their hands. We were more than surprised to hear their protestations, in deep German accents, that all was well.

We soon understood the situation and were chatting together in our large room with Mr. Rottmann, Mr. Bohner and another, who had been delegated to visit our mission stations in the Cameroons on behalf of the Basel Mission, with letters of introduction from Mr. Baynes, the B.M.S. Secretary. This seemed to portend the last days of Baptist work in the country, and we took to it as kindly as possible. Mr. Rottmann was the head of the business side of

the Basel Mission at Accra, and his name was well known to all.

They visited all our stations in Cameroons and Victoria, and made special note of all our property so as to report to head-quarters at Basel. During their visit I learnt much about their Mission and methods of work : the Mission has rightly earned for itself a name for training carpenters, coopers, blacksmiths, bricklayers and other craftsmen, as well as clerks for the traders and governments along the coast right to Loanda in the south ; and, for this practical work, it is held up by many as being superior to all other missions. As the years have passed, the Mission has developed more and more on the trading side, and has become a great business concern, competing not unsuccessfully with the larger trading companies on the West Coast. This is at once the strength and weakness of the Mission. The work depends for its finances upon the profits of the business section, and gets very little financial support from the Lutheran churches in Germany. This combination does not commend itself to the average Englishman, who prefers to pursue his duties as a missionary as free as possible from the pursuit of gain. There is a danger in the union of Church and Commerce as there is in the union of Church and State.

My narrative of the Cameroons will not be complete without reference to the man who played the chief part in the annexation of the Cameroons by Nachtigal and Buchner—Mr. Ed. Schmidt, chief representative of the Woermann African Company. Without him the acquisition of the Cameroons by Germany would not have been possible. Mr. Schmidt was a general favourite and liked by both black and white. He was certainly very kind to the missionaries

and always ready to help us. His hospitality on board the local steamers belonging to the firm was lavish, and we even had free passages in the ocean steamers when going from Duala to Victoria or elsewhere. His love of the Fatherland was strong, and no Briton could find fault with him for that, however much we resented his betrayal of the country into the hands of the Germans. For this he paid dearly in the end.

King Bell was one of the most important traders dealing with his firm, and naturally he had influence over him. When, therefore, the two German travellers reached Cameroons on this mission of territorial expansion he fell in with their plans and induced King Bell to put his signature to the document which led to the annexation. Mr. Schmidt expected some suitable recognition from his Imperial master for this brilliant act of service, and no doubt was encouraged by Nachtigal and Buchner to expect it; but when he arrived in Germany he was so disappointed and disgusted by the nature of his reception that he determined to return to Africa and live henceforth in British territory. So he settled down at Lagos, and there, several years later, when I met him, he complained bitterly to me of his treatment in the Cameroons affair, and vowed that never again would he put his foot on German soil; he was now a true Englishman. He died at Lagos a few years ago, a well-known figure.

About this time Mr. Harry Johnston (afterwards Sir Harry Johnston) was appointed British Vice-Consul for this part of the West Coast, and took up his abode on Mondeleh Island, off Victoria, in the house abandoned by the Pole Rogazinski. He established a Consulate on that island and was a friend to the missionaries, for he held the B.M.S. in

high esteem. He was destined to fill high positions in Eastern Africa, and I met him many times in later years; but I like to think of him as Harry Johnston, the Vice-Consul.

I met another notable man in the last year of my Cameroons period, a purser on one of the Elder Dempster ships, Roger Casement. I saw him first on the old *Bonny*, with Captain Dyson. Ashore he spent his time hunting for plants and rare flowers, and he had a veritable passion for orchids. In half an hour after his arrival at Bethel Station he had discovered among the trees in the garden several beauties that I had never noticed, and was in his glory. He made several voyages when I was at Bethel. The next I heard of him was that he had entered the Consular Service, and had come to Congo, where he made himself a name by the part he took in the "Red Rubber" Exposure. One never knew where he was to be found, but if there was a mission station anywhere near he discovered it. He was a tall, handsome man, a fast traveller, and he generally had a dog with him—a big bulldog—who wore a green ribbon around his neck to match his master's tie.

Never man was prouder of his Irish nationality, and, like Irish folk generally, he was charming in speech and manner. One might call him an ideal British gentleman. We all loved him, and were never happier than when we had Casement as our guest. His intense nationalism evidently grew on him, and his mind became obsessed by it. His services in Congo and South America in connection with rubber atrocities justly earned for him a knighthood, but his hatred of the English brought him finally to a felon's death. But many of us like to think of the Roger Casement of long ago.

In the early part of 1886 news was received that Mr. and Mrs. Fuller were really coming out at last to relieve me. I certainly had suffered from many small fevers, and the Home Committee were getting a bit anxious about my being left alone. I had been out now for over three years, and the strain was beginning to tell upon me. It was, therefore, a great joy to welcome them, for I had heard so much about "Daddy Fuller" from my missionary colleagues and others. When they arrived they took up their abode at the "Big House" at Bethel, and it was not many hours before I had transferred all the household duties to "Mammy." Not having to superintend the preparation of one's own meals was a great relief; even the little things which for euphony's sake are called chickens tasted differently, and the awful monotony of my meals disappeared.

On their voyage they had as fellow passengers Mr. and Mrs. John Weeks and Mr. A. E. Scrivener, on their way to Congo, and they stayed with us at the Mission while the steamer discharged its cargo. This was my first acquaintance with Mr. Scrivener, but our friendship was renewed a year later at Matadi, and continued to be of an intimate character until his death. I was present at his funeral many years afterwards at Southampton. Mr. Weeks was able to relieve us of a quantity of building materials that we had on hand, and take it with him to Congo on board the *Lualaba*. I arranged with the Captain to make my passage back with him on his return from the South Coast, and was very happy in the prospect of voyaging home in the same boat and with the same Captain that had brought me out to Africa three years before.

For the next three weeks Fuller and I had much

to occupy us : we had to dispose of all that could be sold, and make a full inventory of Mission property to be transferred to the Basel Mission. The terms of the transfer were settled in Europe, and Fuller had simply to get ready to hand the property over to the German missionaries when they should arrive. For the most part it was a simple matter. The main condition of the transfer was that the native Churches should retain their own chapels and their Baptist faith, and were in no way to lose their independence.

For some years the Society had been encouraging the native Christians to support their own churches, to employ their own pastors, and to pay for the education of their own children. Silvey had been accepted for this advanced educational plan, but owing to the German annexation it was left in abeyance. But this principle of independence in Church work had been generally adopted. There were among the Victorians and Dualas some very good leaders, as has been proved during the forty years' independent work of the Cameroons Church since that time.

At all stations, except Bethel, the chapels, erected on public ground outside the Mission property, had been legally recognized as the property of the native Church. In these there were no difficulties, but at Bethel the old brick chapel was situated inside the ground belonging to the Society, and this presented a difficulty. We therefore arrived at an agreement that the native Church, under the leadership of Pastor Joshua Dibundu, should build a new chapel of their own, the B.M.S. being responsible for the iron sheeting for the roofs, and the other materials necessary, to be shipped from England. This new building, much larger than the original, was erected in close proximity

to the old station, and still retains the name of Bethel as head-quarters of the Duala Baptists.

Waiting for the return of the ship was not tedious with so much work to do and with such a companion as Joseph Jackson Fuller. Nobody knew the Mission as he did. When quite young he had come across from Jamaica, his father, Alexander Fuller, being among the early settlers in Fernando Po. Joseph did yeoman service with Merrick at Bimbia in connection with the Press ; he was Saker's right-hand in the translation and printing of the Duala Bible, and was rewarded for his faithful service by having a mission station of his own on the northern bank, nearly opposite Bethel. How he loved every brick in that beautiful chapel at Hickory, and how he wept like a child to see it all in ruins "after the War"! In England, pleading the cause of his African brother, nobody had a better reception from English audiences than this noble negro orator. Who among those who heard him will ever forget his story of the "Burial of Slavery" and the midnight scene at Kingston, Jamaica, when the vast crowd of liberated slaves sang the Doxology.

I never met a negro so full of humour, and he enjoyed saying witty things against himself and his people. One evening, sitting with our feet on the top rail of the veranda in Alfred Saker's house, he was talking about his first arrival with his boys at Hickory Station. They had carried all the luggage, consisting of tin trunks and bundles, and piled them up in a big heap on the square. Fuller had arranged with the chief for a hut where he and his boys could sleep. He was perplexed about the luggage, and thought the head boy should move the articles to the shelter of the house, lest they should be all stolen

during the night. The head boy, not wishing to go to all that trouble, replied to his master, "Nevva min' sa' me put dat all right," and forthwith with great ceremony got a piece of old newspaper, folded it in fantastic shapes, and solemnly walked round the pile of boxes several times, muttering mysterious words. The crowd of townspeople looked on in awe and fear, till finally he carefully fixed the paper on the top and walked backwards from it. Turning to his master, he said, "Now sa' you go sleep : no man fit tief massa's tings." Next morning everything was still there. Then Fuller, with a twinkle in his eye, told me, as a green young missionary, "We have been here preaching the Gospel for close on thirty years, and nobody would think of leaving their belongings on the square to-day!"

When the *Lualaba* arrived I found that I was to have as fellow passengers two Congo missionaries who were going home on furlough. One was Mr. Petterson of the Swedish Mission, and the other Mr. Moolenaar, of our own B.M.S. This was an unexpected pleasure, and the voyage of five weeks to Liverpool passed happily.

We stayed several days at Calabar, where there was cargo enough to fill the ship. I was now quite at home with the friends of the Presbyterian Mission, and we spent nearly all our time with them at Duke Town. One evening we were commandeered by Mary Slessor to go with her into a native town a few miles in the bush to manipulate the magic lantern. We immediately agreed, and two lady missionaries came along as well. The two memorable things to us were Mary's voice as she explained the Bible pictures to the vast crowd in the open air, and the way she held her audience.

THE CAMEROONS MISSIONS IN 1922, WHEN MR. LEWIS REVISITED THE SCENE.

We envied her the lung power she possessed in that frail body.

We arrived in Liverpool, I remember, on the 5th of April, and as we sailed slowly along the coast of North Wales found the country covered with snow. It was bitterly cold when we arrived in the Mersey, soon after daylight, and it was snowing fast. Moolenaar and I had each brought a black boy with us to this country. It was a common thing then for missionaries to bring a favourite lad home to be educated and trained, but experience has taught us all better things for Africa. Those poor lads looked in despair at the snow-covered country of the white man!

When we were told that the tender was coming alongside there was a rush on deck, and passengers scanned the vessel for their friends, but, alas! few had got up so early. We expected no one, but joined the rest in the search. It was not long before I was attracted to a solitary figure standing in a corner, and I recognized the "mysterious little man" who had given me the packet of silver on my outward voyage just three years before. He rushed on board and made a bee-line for me, announcing himself as "John Parry," and thus betraying his identity for the first time. He was beside himself with joy, for instead of having me only, he had three! and he packed us all into a cab and landed us at his Everton home.

There his astonished wife took us in and looked as calm and happy as if she had been waiting for us—and this for breakfast, mind you, a good bit overdue.

We had a delightful time with them until we went off to London by an afternoon train.

CHAPTER X

My First Furlough

Like most missionaries, I had been looking forward with eagerness to my first furlough, and expected to find everything and everybody just as I had left them three and a half years before. It was a shock to find so many changes in so short a time. My fellow students had all left College and settled down, mostly in the home ministry. Some had passed out of my life altogether, but my friendship with others became more intimate than before. I found myself trying to readjust my life to meet new circumstances, and gradually it dawned upon me that the greatest change of all was in myself. I had been thrust out into a new world and had gone through enough exciting experiences to make a new man of me. The attitude of my friends towards me showed that they recognized the change. Our conversation had lost a great deal of the trivialities of youth, and we found pleasure in studying the various experiences of the home ministry and the mission field. In those days missionary experiences, especially in Africa, were of the romantic type, and people were not bored by travellers' tales.

During my first term of service in the Cameroons I hardly gave a thought to missionary policy or methods. I went out with senior men ready to do anything that was needed, and was put to a work that had been well established, well satisfied that the methods adopted were the best, and happy to put all my youthful energy into it. It never occurred to

me to question the wisdom of any of it. This was not all to the good, for it kept me from thinking things out for myself, and I confess that during my first term I never initiated any new scheme of work. With the ever-decreasing staff on the field we found it more than we could do to keep all the departments going. There was no opportunity for trying out any new ideas, and at the close of the day one was too tired even to think.

However, when the first excitement of meeting friends was over, I began to review my personal experience and to think out the why and wherefore of things on the mission field. After over forty years, I still think that a missionary can think more clearly, and arrive at saner conclusions on missionary subjects, when far away from the scene of action. In the midst of all the worries and excitement abroad one is apt to take a distorted and one-sided view of things.

This, at any rate, was true in my experience, for now I began to question myself in regard to methods adopted in the Cameroons Mission. I knew that I was going to Congo to engage in missionary work in a new country, and this encouraged me to think things out for myself. Looking back over the years, I believe that the plans of Alfred Saker and his colleagues were wonderful. For a wide outlook into the future, I can think of no other mission policy at that time that surpassed the system in the Cameroons. But on thinking out problems for myself, I began to be dissatisfied with the system in vogue there in regard to native teachers and evangelists. It was the rule to employ these as agents of the Society ; they were given a special status much coveted by the African Christians, and received their pay from the

Mission. There was considerable reluctance on the part of the ordinary church member to do any evangelistic work other than taking a class in the Sunday School. To render even temporary help in the day school, or take part in preaching in the villages, was more than they would do voluntarily ; they thought it was a work to be paid for by the white man. My immediate predecessors had evidently felt the same difficulty, for they had only just succeeded in getting the Bethel church to appoint its own pastor and pay his salary. This turned out to be the salvation of the Duala churches, for when the European missionaries left there was a fully organised native Church, with its own pastor, to carry on and develop the Mission. It was not long before I came to the conclusion that all teachers and evangelists should be agents of the native Church, paid out of its funds and never taught to look to the Mission for support. At the time I had my doubts as to the practicability of such a plan, but I had made up my mind that if the opportunity offered itself to me I would try the experiment. Later on I found that others of my colleagues had been thinking in the same direction, but I little thought then that the opportunity to test these opinions would come so quickly.

Memories of deputation work during this first furlough, and particularly of my first tour in the West of England with Leonard Tucker, who had just returned from India, are very pleasant. I fear that my addresses were distinctly tame in comparison with the cultured and carefully prepared deliverances on the religions of India which were the masterpieces of my colleague. Whenever I had the misfortune to speak in company with him, as at the town centres where it was customary to have two speakers, I

generally resorted to the praise of my hero, Alfred Saker, otherwise Africa would have had no chance of being considered! In the village churches, too, Mr. Tucker was a grand favourite. He had with him a box of Indian gods and goddesses, for no Indian deputation, forty years ago, would have been equipped without a complement of images. My friend used to marshal these in front of him, and balance them carefully on the pulpit desk and on the Bible, while his audience almost gasped for breath in their eagerness. Before introducing his troupe one by one, he selected a large shell, and brought it to his mouth, explaining that it was the shell with which the priests called the worshippers to the temple service. Then he blew a terrific blast which shook the building, and after that there was no opportunity for the audience to sleep. Much depended on how it was done, and Leonard knew the way! This was my first deputation tour, and I shall never forget it.

The Welsh Baptist Union Meetings were held at Aberdare that year, and it was natural that I should be one of the speakers at the Missionary Meeting. That gathering is still remembered by many because of the enthusiasm created by Mr. Alfred H. Baynes, and a Welsh address by Mr. Davies, of Pandy'r Capel. The latter had gripped his black felt hat in his right hand, and emphasised the points of his speech by shaking it vigorously in the face of his audience as his eloquence fired up into a frenzied climax. It was a memorable deliverance.

The Autumn Meetings of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland were held at Bristol, with the Farewell to missionaries in the old Colston Hall, and Dr. Maclaren gave the valedictory address. It is generally conceded that the great preacher was

never more eloquent than at this meeting. He roused his audience to the highest pitch of excitement as he pleaded for enthusiasm in missionary work. "If," said he, "you want to drive a pointed piece of iron through a thick board, the surest way to do it is to heat your skewer. It is always easier to burn our way than to bore it." It was a privilege to be valedicted at such a meeting, and the inspiration of it has never passed from my heart.

I believe the only new missionary valedicted was Herbert Anderson, leaving for India; the rest of us were missionaries returning to our work after furlough.

The winter was spent in various parts of England and Wales, and the experience made me realise what a wonderful number of good people there are in the world. One could write a long chapter on the pleasures and joys of deputation work.

Yet I confess that my supreme happiness was to visit my father in the old home. It was about the only place I found unchanged. How I enjoyed every moment of my stay in the old thatched cottage, and the chats with friends at night around the blazing fire in the smithy. My farmer friends, knowing of my home-coming, would gather as of yore and ply me with questions about my African experiences. Though we kept on until the early hours of the morning, nobody felt tired. On these occasions my father was very quiet, but I am sure that he was the happiest of men. He pretended to work, so as to prolong the talks, and he listened to every word. It was delightful to watch him as he tried to disguise his pride in his missionary son. I saw him on two furloughs after this, and the joy of meeting increased, if possible, on each occasion. He died very suddenly at last when I was in Africa. He had always been a

Sunday School man ; he taught in his class one Sunday, went home unwell, and died two days later. He had made great sacrifices to help me to become a missionary, and I am happy in the thought that he considered himself abundantly repaid.

Meanwhile, the Missionary Committee had settled the destiny of the few missionaries left on the Cameroons staff. There was need of a man to undertake special work among the English-speaking students in Dacca, and R. Wright Hay was appointed to India. Miss Emily Saker was asked to join the staff of the Zenana Mission in India, and she accepted the proposal, feeling assured that the closing of the Cameroons Mission was a plain indication that God meant her to go there. Miss Gwen Thomas was also appointed to India, and was in training at Dr. Griffith's Zenana Medical School in South London with a view to proceeding to her new sphere in the following year. Mr. and Mrs. Fuller, still on the field, were to retire from service after the formal transfer of the Mission premises to the Basel Mission. It was taken for granted that I would follow my friend Silvey and join the Congo Mission.

All these arrangements were carried out except in one instance. Miss Thomas and I had worked together in the Cameroons, and during the last portion of my furlough our friendship deepened into something more, and I asked her to become my wife and throw in her lot with me in the Congo Mission. Mr. Baynes and the Committee were very agreeable to this change of plan, and she had the joy of going to the field to which she had given her affection, for in the first instance she had been engaged to be married to the Congo Pioneer missionary, John Hartland.

For over twenty-two years after this union we worked

side by side in Congo, and she certainly was not the lesser of the two. Those interested in her career are referred to her story written by my friend, George Hawker, under the title "An Englishwoman's Twenty-five Years in West Africa." Notwithstanding the title of this volume my wife was the daughter of a Welshman, George Thomas, who had migrated to London from Maentwrog, in the Vale of Festiniog, where three generations of the Thomas family are buried in the quiet parish churchyard. The Celtic blood ran strongly in her veins, and this predisposed her in my favour. We were married by Mr. Hawker at Camden Road Church prior to our sailing for Africa, and immediately before the opening ceremony of the annual Congo Sale there. We were both members of this church, which has from its beginning been closely connected with the Congo Mission.

In March, 1887, my wife and I took ship from Liverpool in order to call at the Cameroons for my belongings. There was a farewell meeting at Camden Road, and the friends gathered in large numbers to wish us well. Mr. and Mrs. Moolenaar, also members at Camden Road, had sailed two months before, so the missionary temperature registered high in our home church.

In those days no Congo missionary was allowed to sail from Liverpool without an enthusiastic send-off from the joint churches. This time the gathering was held at Toxteth Tabernacle, and Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Lockhart were good enough to ask a number of friends to meet us at their home. The ministers were there in full force, and my life-long friend, the Rev. Charles Davies, of Everton Village Welsh Church, gave a special address. It was a delight to my wife, especially, to see there the Rev. J. Jenkyn

Brown, of Birmingham, a personal friend of her father, who treated her as a daughter all through her life. He had come to London before to give the bride away at the wedding, and was very pleased that Gwen had married a Welshman ! Of course, Mr. John Parry and a host of Welshmen were at the Tabernacle, and he was also at the landing stage to see us off on the s.s. *Gaboon* on the following day.

The voyage was uneventful as far as I can remember. There were two ladies besides my wife, and the three shared the ladies' cabin. It was the rule that all lady passengers, married and single, should occupy this six-berthed cabin, and they were not supposed to show themselves outside that inner chamber until after eight o'clock in the morning. I shared a cabin with a young Scottish trader. We were right over the propeller, and had a fine " churning " across the Bay of Biscay. Most of the passengers left the ship at Calabar, and then we had more comfort.

Our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Fuller, with the Mission folk, gave us a rousing welcome at Cameroons, and as the ship had to stay nearly two days there, we had ample time to get our baggage on board. I had packed everything ready when I left a year before. The Basel missionaries had taken up their residence in the large house at Bethel, one of them being Mr. Bohner, who had come with the first delegation to view the land, and they were all most hospitable and kind. They seemed to understand our feelings at saying good-bye to the mission and the people. I paid a visit to the Governor, who was again most pleasant, and altogether our parting was made easy. As all the business had been transacted and the papers signed, Mr. and Mrs. Fuller took the next ship to Europe, and we proceeded to our new venture.

THE CAMEROONS MISSION.

(1) BETHEL, THE DUALLA MISSION HOUSE, FROM THE RIVER.
(2) A TEACHERS' CONFERENCE AT SOPPO, 1922.
(3) CONNAUGHT AVENUE AND VICTORIA BAPTIST CHURCH, VICTORIA.

In a few days we reached Banana, at the northern entrance to the Congo, a narrow strip of land with an average width of about a hundred yards, stretching out from the mainland at right angles to the river stream. On the inner side, which is sheltered from the wind, there is deep water, and ocean steamers can come alongside and anchor with safety. It is over a mile in length, and it affords shelter for all sorts of craft. On this strip of land are established two large trading factories, one belonging to the Dutch and another to the Portuguese, and there are also smaller firms and a Government post. The Dutch House is an old-established firm dating back to the old slaving days, and they acted as agents to our Mission for years, receiving all our goods and forwarding them by their small river steamer up the river to Underhill or Matadi. It happened that when we arrived the Dutch river steamer had just left to gather cargo along the coast, and was not expected back for a month. We were, therefore, compelled to wait for nearly three weeks and use all the patience at our command.

For the accommodation of travellers and visitors the Dutch House had built a primitive but comfortable hotel, and placed a Portuguese in charge. The bedrooms were in a building apart from the main portion, and arranged in two rows, with a corridor between, running into a wide veranda facing the sea. They looked like the loose boxes of a stable, quite open at the top, and provided ample opportunity for conversation after going to bed. Bells, electric or otherwise, were not included in the scheme, but there was a big bell on a belfry in the yard to call the guests in the morning and to mark the hours of meals.

On this occasion there was a Belgian party in the

house, also waiting for a steamer. They were most companionable. They had returned from up country, and had completed their survey of the course of the Congo Railway from Matadi to Tumba. The chief turned out to be Major Thys, who for many years afterwards was the popular head of the Railway Company. The now important town of Thysville was named after him, and he rendered valuable service to Congoland.

To our joy one day we had the news that the Portuguese Company's river steamer would be leaving for Noki in two days, and, if we desired, we could go as far as that by this boat, afterwards seeking other means of reaching Underhill. Without any hesitation we accepted the offer and said good-bye for some time to Banana and the sea.

CHAPTER XI

First Voyage up the Congo River

The s.s. *Luzo* turned out to be a comfortable little vessel, with two cabins just large enough for two berths. One of them was placed at our disposal, while the chief agent of the company, who was travelling with us, occupied the other. The presence of the chief was a good thing, for it secured the best behaviour of everybody on board. We crossed and recrossed the river, visiting the trading posts. The South bank is Portuguese territory, while the North bank belongs to the Belgians. On the second day we reached Ponta da Lenha, notorious as the chief port of the Congo for the shipment of slaves.

Dr. Holman Bentley, in his "Pioneering on the Congo," gives a lurid account of the doings of the slave dealers at this place, and the frightful cruelties perpetrated to avoid being taken by the officers of the British gunboats. The Ponta da Lenha traders knew their business too well to be caught napping, and carried on their nefarious trade right down to the seventies, and even later in a smaller way. Bentley tells the story of how the slave ship *Wanderer*, camouflaged as a pleasure yacht, sailed in to Banana creek and dipped her flag to the British man-of-war lying at anchor, and how the Captain received the visits of the man-of-war officers and entertained them lavishly with champagne in a luxurious plush-seated state-room. They drank to the success of the voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, and thence to India and

China. They said that they had heard of Ponta da Lenha, and thought they would run up the thirty miles just to see it. But at night the plush seats vanished, the ship was filled to its utmost capacity with slaves, and next day before noon the same innocent-looking vessel sailed out to sea, again dipping its flag in salute to the warship. But the British officer took no risks after this, and the export of slaves ceased.

There were some traces of the old barracoons still standing, and the rotting piles along the wharf were suggestive of past prosperity. I was deeply interested in this place and its history. I was told that the place was facetiously called Ponta da Lenha (Firewood Point) because every ship went there for a cargo of "firewood," a Portuguese equivalent for the English "black ivory."

That evening we slept at Boma, which was then nothing more than a military post with some trading establishments. All along the mosquitoes were troublesome at night, and we had no netting to protect us from their attacks. We looked forward to the nights with dread, and were happy to start for the last run from Boma to Noki, which was reached before noon next day. Noki was then, as it is now, the chief Portuguese port up the Congo River, S. Antonio, near Shark Point, being the port of call for Portuguese ocean steamers. It has considerable business and serves as a base for the San Salvador and Makela districts.

Our next anxiety was to reach our destination, farther up the river, and by the kindness of the Portuguese trader we were able to secure a canoe, with seven native paddlers, to take us in. This canoe came alongside the steamer, we put our tin

trunks and all our belongings in it, and very soon we were away, the seven men paddling with all their might against the strong current, and singing their quaint boat songs as they toiled up river.

Turning point after point, the force of the current was exceedingly difficult to negotiate, and our progress was very slow. About midday we had come into sight of the white bungalow on the top of the hill, which we knew at once to be the Mission Station, for our Portuguese benefactor had shown us the jutting scarp of the hill from Noki. As we came nearer and nearer we strained our eyes to see if there were any white people about, and after a while distinguished two figures which we thought were European. They were also looking down, using their field glasses, and soon discovered that there were white people in the native canoe slowly approaching their beach. When a little later the paddlers headed towards the little bay where we were to land, the two figures on the hill started to run down a zigzag path to the landing place. We were soon near enough to discern that our friends were none other than Tom Comber and Moolenaar, both of them personal friends of Mrs. Lewis and fellow-workers at Camden Road for some years before they had left for Africa.

As we pulled nearer the shore I noticed from their faces that something was amiss, and, turning to my wife, said, "There is something wrong : look at Tom's face." We were not unprepared for this, as we had heard rumours at Banana that more missionaries had died. Our canoe soon struck land, and our friends helped us ashore. There were warm words of greeting and welcome, and then we got our baggage from the canoe and paid the men. Moolenaar took my wife up the path towards the Station, and Tom

Comber took my arm and drew me aside about fifty yards up the narrow ravine.

On the other side was a little burial place with two newly filled-in graves. Pointing to these, he said, "You see those two fresh graves? We put Darling and Shindler there a few days ago." Actually four weeks had passed since. And then, as we went up the hill, he related how he had been watching over Darling, helping to nurse him during a very severe fever until he had died in his arms. "I put my finger over his eyes and closed them in death," he said, "and I came out of that room a broken-hearted man. For the moment I had forgotten that Shindler was lying in the other bungalow, also ill with fever. When I got there I found him much worse, and in another hour he, too, passed away." Next morning these two brave men had been laid to rest side by side in that little cemetery at the foot of the hill.

But to us there was another vision of a different kind, for in that bungalow was a young widow in dire agony of soul, yet battling with her sorrow with rare courage and great faith. Two months before Miss Seed, from Leeds, had come out to Congo to be married to Darling, and had looked forward to a life of splendid comradeship in mission work. Within eight weeks of her wedding day he had been taken from her. That was why my wife hurried along before Comber and myself to render some womanly comfort and sympathy to a sister in agony of soul. Only a brave woman could go through such an experience without utterly collapsing. But if that bungalow had had the power of speech it could have told another tale of woe. Only a few months before, John Maynard had died after six days of malignant fever. Miss Pitt, to whom he was engaged to be married,

was then on the voyage to Congo, and on her arrival Comber had had to break the news to her that Maynard was dead and buried. She had returned to England by the steamer that had brought her out !

Comber in those dark days seemed to have done nothing but nurse the sick and bury the dead and comfort the bereaved. He had gone to Banana to meet Miss Pitt, and then had come the tragedy of the double death and the escorting of Mrs. Darling to the coast. All this had left him in a most depressed state of mind. On the eve of his departure with Mrs. Darling, the news came of the death of Miss Spearing at Stanley Pool. It was almost the last straw. At Banana he found a Portuguese steamer going to Mossamedes, and he decided to make a sea trip which gave him eighteen days' rest and invigorating air. Explaining the reason for this holiday, he wrote to his father : " I am a little run down bodily and mentally, and need this little rest. What has happened has quite unhinged me." This was literally true, for during the two days we were together he could talk of nothing else. Sleep had deserted him. I never saw a real smile on his face all the time. He seemed to dread Mrs. Darling getting a fever before he could get her safely on board ship for home. His nerves were shattered. It was pitiful to see his attempts at cheerfulness, especially at meals. How different from the Tom Comber we had met at Calabar two years before !

The sea trip did him very little good. On the 14th of June, 1887, he was attacked by a fever of the worst type, and Dr. Small, of the American Mission, very kindly undertook to treat him. The bad hæmoglobinuric symptoms disappeared, and it was hoped that with care he would rally, but on the 19th of June

the trouble returned with increased power. Next day, by means of cold sponging, the fever was reduced, although the serious symptoms remained. It was felt that the only chance to save his life was to get him away to sea. Lieutenant Valcke, President of the Executive Council of the Congo State, placed the little steamer, the *Prince Baudoin*, at his disposal, and Scrivener accompanied him to Boma. The following day (24th June) a German steamer, the *Lulu Bohlen*, arrived, and in the cool of the evening Comber was placed on board. One of the owners of the steamer was on the ship, and every consideration and attention was shown. The sea breezes seemed to benefit him, and hope revived for a time ; but he gradually sank, until on the 27th of June, 1887, while the steamer was at anchor off Loango, he passed away. He was conscious to the last, calm, peaceful and resigned. Next morning the ship put into Mayumba Bay, and there the body of our brave Tom Comber was buried on shore.

Scrivener was with him till the end, and attended to his grave in this forlorn place, yet in the land that Comber loved so well. When he returned to Underhill it was with the saddest news that the Mission had received. Comber was so universally beloved ; he was one of the most winsome characters I ever met—a born leader of men, and he had worn himself out in devotion to his colleagues and to his Master.

On the Lower River we younger men felt like sheep without a shepherd. Holman Bentley had gone on an important journey on the Upper River, Grenfell was home on furlough, Weeks had been invalided home when his presence was most needed at San Salvador. Yet I never heard a murmur from any of my colleagues ; each was eager to go forward to

do the rough pioneering work. Mr. and Mrs. Moolenaar were compelled to stay at Underhill with Scrivener, and my wife and I only waited for carriers to take us to San Salvador.

Ross Phillips brought down thirty-five men to fetch us and our belongings. It was just the end of the wet season, and Comber had left strict orders that we were not to start before the finish of the rains. The last rains are supposed to fall in these parts about the 15th of May, but as the weather seemed to have cleared we decided to make a start on the 10th. However, on the 16th of May, one day after scheduled time, we were caught in a heavy thunderstorm, but happily we had reached a native town and pitched our tent before it came upon us.

To us who had lived in the Cameroons this country of Congo was dreary and barren indeed. It was all rocks and hills, and the valleys were choked with tall elephant grass through which we had to force our way, constantly losing sight of the track and finding ourselves enmeshed in its toils. Day after day we tramped along with hardly a village to be seen anywhere. We had not been accustomed to groups of half a dozen huts in different grades of decomposition being called "towns," each one having its own chief. The Americans used a different vocabulary, and called the towns villages and the chiefs kings. I have never decided myself which is the correct term for either !

There is very little forest on the Lower Congo ; the only wooded patches are around villages, to protect the inhabitants from the great yearly bush fires, which resemble the prairie fires of the West. The inhabitants of a district arrange to burn their grass about the end of the dry season in August or September.

This is, of course, the great hunting season, when all the wild animals—antelopes, deer and buffaloes—run away in fury before the advancing flames. In their eagerness for the hunt the people often forget their village homes and grass huts, and the sparks, rising high into the air, come down on the grass roofs, in a few minutes reducing the " town " to ashes. It was one of these fires that was responsible for the destruction of our Mission Station at Stanley Pool the season before our arrival.

As we travelled in May we had no excitement of that kind. Indeed, the journey was noted only for its weary monotony. Once we thought something lively had come our way. As we entered the bush near a native town we heard a weird, shrill sound in the distance, and our carriers came to an instant standstill. I was walking at the rear of the caravan, and they all refused to move forward until I came up ; it was the signal of the *Nkimba* men, a secret society which lived on robbing passers-by, and very much feared by travellers. The cult is one of the least objectionable of the secret societies of the Africans, and at first was intended to be a sort of freemasonry, united to protect its members against the witch doctors. But in accordance with a common rule of depraved human nature it developed into a semi-licensed gang of brigands, with a secret language of their own, each member being sworn to secrecy on all points, even after a party has been disbanded. Members, who wear a crinoline of palm fronds and whiten their bodies with pipe-clay, are only in for a year or two at a time, and may be only a few months. No women are admitted.

From a vantage point they had seen a caravan laden with goods crossing the shoulder of a hill, and

they came down to the bush on business bent. Their shrill cry is usually enough to cause everybody to drop their loads and run away. Nobody is supposed to resist ; the superstitious fear of them is very great. When I came up to the hammock in which my wife was carried the situation was explained, and the headman and I walked in front. Not a hundred yards away we saw the Nkimba gang rushing down to our path, but on seeing a white man they halted and stared at me. As I neared them the leader turned round and sent his followers back before him, and they disappeared into the bush. It was my only encounter with Nkimba. A year or two later in the same place another caravan was molested, and there happened to be a Portuguese trader in that company. When he saw the white apparition of the Nkimba he was terribly frightened, and lifted his rifle and shot the leader. After that we heard that all Nkimbas had disbanded.

Two days before arriving at San Salvador we had a special note from Mr. Graham asking Phillips to hurry back, because Weeks was much worse. So Phillips made a double journey on the last day, and got in a day before us. We arrived about one o'clock on the ninth day, and a great welcome was given us by the hundreds of natives who had come to meet us, among them a special messenger from the King. We found that Weeks was better, and at the moment he was supposed to be asleep. However, he had heard our voices in the common-room of the old stone-house and astounded us by appearing at his bedroom door, with a dressing-gown around him, and a face as ghastly as if he had come out of his grave. He would insist on giving us a welcome in person.

CHAPTER XII

San Salvador and the First Baptisms

When Diogo Cão, in the year 1482, discovered the Congo River, he also discovered, through the natives inhabiting the district, the great and important Kingdom of Congo. He despatched some negro messengers to the Mani Congo (Lord of the Land), who ruled his people with much pomp and ceremony at Ambassa, about one hundred and fifty miles inland at the centre of the kingdom. This place is identical with the Ekongo of the modern native and the San Salvador of the Portuguese. The messengers returned with wonderful tales of a great king and gorgeous court at the capital, which led to a number of Portuguese merchants being sent out to engage in trade with the natives of this newly discovered country.

" It was the wise policy of King Joao II of Portugal, when new discoveries were made, to leave some trustworthy Portuguese among the natives to cultivate friendly relations with them, and to push on into the interior under their guidance so as to collect information of the people and the country in those parts. With this design the King put in action the unceasing desire and zeal which he had for the propagation of the Christian religion, and gave preference to those missionaries who had mathematical knowledge."

The worthy aims and noble ideals of the illustrious Prince did not long occupy the minds of the merchants and missionaries who had settled at the capital, for very soon we find them busily engaged in the

more congenial and lucrative business of the slave trade, and the royal city became the centre of their operations. There are many townships in the present day bearing the name of "Kinganga" (i.e. the town of the priests) and the inhabitants consider themselves the inherited property of the Catholic priests. In those days the slave trade was considered a most respectable branch of commerce, and enjoyed the full benediction of the Church. The slave gangs on their way to the coast were accompanied by one or more priests acting as chaplains, dispensing the consolations of the Church to the wretched people who all day groaned under the torture of the driver's whip. The slave routes can be traced to-day by the names of villages, such as Vunda (resting-place), where they rested for the noonday meal, and Vemadia (Ave Maria) where they sang their Ave Marias and slept the night.

Why is it that the Christian Church has persistently countenanced the fable of the Curse of Ham, and misquoted the Bible in its effort to find Scripture sanction for the enslavement of the African? For centuries it has been used as an argument for slavery and allowed to pass unchallenged. There never was such a thing as the "Curse of Ham."! When Noah's second son so shamefully failed in his filial duty, the aged father remonstrated with him in these words: "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." Ham had four sons—Cush, Mizraim, Phut and Canaan. The curse, whatever it meant, was pronounced on Canaan, the youngest son, and we know that the Canaanites became hewers of wood and drawers of water to the Israelites, and as a nation were utterly destroyed. Yet we have been in the habit of shifting that curse on to the African

negroes, who are the descendants of Ham's eldest son, Cush.

There were always hundreds of slaves at headquarters, and they were used in building fortresses and city walls for their masters, and churches for the worship of God. One of the early churches was called San Salvador (St. Saviour), which gave the name to the city. The natives called it Ekongo dia Ngunga, Ekongo meaning the highest seat of authority, and Ngunga meaning a bell, for St. Saviour's church had a bell.

City and churches were rebuilt several times at different periods, for the Portuguese were driven away or massacred more than once. Some ten churches were built on the hill where the present town stands. The ruins of one still remain, with the main arch over the altar in a fair state of preservation. There was also a monastery, portions of whose walls stood when our missionaries arrived in 1879, and the site was given to Comber and Grenfell for our mission dwellings. These stones were used to build the Mission House and later to erect the large chapel which is still rendering valuable service to our work.

The old civilization of San Salvador was built and maintained entirely on the slave trade. The King of Congo and his people had become expert slave dealers under the tuition of their white masters, and had far surpassed them in cruelty. The emissaries of the King were slave dealers and had developed into slave raiders. Why should they travel far into the interior markets and buy slaves at market prices when they could raid villages and get them for nothing? So demoralized had these Kongos become that it was a common thing for a man to sell his own brother or sister. But the slave trade was at last the undoing of

them, and when our missionaries arrived the King's people were afraid to go far from home lest they should be captured in retaliation. Bentley speaks of this, and I personally knew an old man (then blind) who, as Councillor of the King, travelled back and forth scores of times from San Salvador to Loanda with slaves. He confessed to me one day that God had taken away his sight because of this slave business. He hoped that God might forgive him now that he had a son in our mission. Such were the men and times when our first missionaries arrived to preach the Gospel to them. The King, Dom Pedro V, received them kindly, and he was no doubt glad to have a white man to lead him and his people back to peace and prosperity.

I must relate here an incident which had prepared the way for the missionaries. In 1873, an Englishman, Lieutenant Grandy, set out on an expedition to find Livingstone. He went in at Ambriz, on the coast, and was passing not far from San Salvador when he heard that the King was dangerously ill with smallpox. He decided to call and see what he could do to help. He saw the King and treated him with simple remedies which resulted in his complete recovery. The patient and people put down the recovery to the white man. When Grandy left the King called his people together and charged them that if ever an Englishman should come to his country at any future time they should give him a good reception, because an Englishman had saved the King's life. I heard this from Dom Pedro himself. The next Englishmen to come were Comber and Grenfell, and the King kept his word.

Two days after our arrival the King received us at his " palace," which was nothing more than a glorified

grass hut! We heard that great preparations were in progress. The tinselled arm-chair which served as a throne was duly dusted and placed on a large piece of carpet in the yard before the door. His Majesty sat on it in great discomfort, for he was abnormally stout and fat! To make matters worse, he was dressed in the uniform of a Portuguese officer, with a feathered cocked hat on his head, and in his hand he held a sceptre—all given him by Padre Baroso, who represented the Portuguese Government. But the chief glory of his sable majesty was a fine robe trimmed with real ermine. It had been the Mayoral robe of Sir Charles Wathen, Lord Mayor of Bristol, and had been given to Comber and Bentley to be presented to the King of Congo. This robe is still worn on special occasions by Dom Pedro's successors, and is the symbol of the greatest power in Congoland.

We were led into the presence of the King by a special messenger, between a maze of fences, and it took some time for our stately procession to get near the throne. At intervals, as we approached the royal presence, our guide and our attendants fell on their knees and saluted in accordance with the full Congo usage, making obeisance by rubbing their hands in the dust of the ground and then rubbing them on the forehead. At last we were within five yards of the King, where two ordinary chairs were placed for my wife and myself. Salutations were repeated, and then we talked. The King made a speech, which was repeated by his chief man at his side. I replied, and thanked him for this wonderful reception, adding that I had heard so much about his majesty while in England, and so on. Then we descended to ordinary talk. His first inquiry was about Donna Victoria

the Queen of England. Was she well? What did she think of him? Had I brought a message from her to the King of Congo?

On our departure from the "palace" the King's trumpeter blew his trumpet with great vigour, and the people shouted until they were hoarse. One of our boys informed me that that was because the King was pleased with the present of coloured velveteen and the piece of silk which I had given to him! Now that my wife and I had been presented at court, we had the freedom of the country. Next day Dom Pedro returned our visit at the Mission Station, and the formalities came to an end.

The story of the founding of the Mission at San Salvador has been told by others, and I need not give it here. I arrived on the scene when the difficult phases of the pioneer work were passed, when the Gospel story had been told and re-told by many missionaries. For seven long years they toiled without seeing any definite conversions to God. Many personal boys had been impressed by constant touch with their missionaries, but one was afraid to lay too much confidence in lads inside the Mission Station. What would they do when exposed to the temptations of town life? No attempt was made to hurry public profession of Christianity, but towards the end of 1886 there appeared definite signs of an awakening among the people. It was one of the dark years in the history of the Congo Mission. Many had died and others had been invalided home. At San Salvador the people had witnessed the death of Mr. Cowe, a few days after his arrival; had watched Dixon (later one of the Chinese Boxer martyrs) in his suffering, and in his sorrow in having to leave the country; they knew that their old friend Hartland,

and others, had given their lives for them ; and they began to think to a purpose.

God used the agonies of those dark years to prepare the hearts of the people for the Light. It was just when it was darkest that the great change came.

Comber had taken home with him to England a young lad from San Salvador named Mantu, and sent him to school with friends in the north of London. On their return to San Salvador, early in 1886, Mantu was baptized in the presence of a number of his friends, and was actually the first native to submit to the rite of baptism in the Congo.

Our American friends had already experienced a revival at *Mbanza Manteka*, where many were gathered in, and a Church formed ; and no doubt the influence of this movement created a new enthusiasm in the district of San Salvador. So it came to pass that on the 2nd of December, 1887, we had the privilege of baptizing the first company of converts to form the nucleus of the Christian Church of our Congo Mission. The scene was at a little stream at the foot of a hill a mile from the Mission Station. Hundreds of people came down to see the baptism, and there was great excitement among our adherents. Even at that time we had translated small portions of Scripture into the language of the people, and had also composed some hymns in the native language, and taught the people to sing them. By the water-side we read passages of Scripture specially translated for the occasion, bearing on the subject of baptism, and we sang our hymns with great enthusiasm and power.

When we had explained the meaning of the rite to the crowd looking on, it was my great privilege to lead those five converts into the water and baptize

them into the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Then we formed ourselves into a long procession and marched back to the top of the hill to our Mission Station, singing hymns all the way. We were a happy company, for we were gathering in the first-fruits of the glorious harvest which it has been our joy to reap in Congoland.

Neither shall I forget the following Sunday in our little Mission Chapel. It was a small building made of bamboo, with grass roof and an earthen floor, with a table at one end at which we preached. The place was crowded in the morning with an excited congregation, and there were others outside, looking in through the windows and joining with us in the service. Those baptized on the Friday morning were there, and gave their testimony.

At the close of the service, at which Carson Graham delivered an address to the newly baptized, a few of us retired to our little bungalow for a Communion Service. Can you imagine our feelings? There we were, three missionaries and my wife—four white people—and the five converts. As we look back through the years, it is a remarkable fact that all three missionaries are still alive—Carson Graham, Ross Phillips and myself.

Ross Phillips conducted the service, but very few words were spoken ; our joy was too great for speech. We were sitting down for the first time with natives of Congoland around the Lord's Table, and before the end of the service we were unable to speak to one another. At the close there were tears of joy running down every cheek. We stood in a little circle around the Table, and then, moved by some mysterious power not our own, we shook hands with one another across the Table—a sign and token of

Christian fellowship. And in that simple way we formed the Church at San Salvador.

We did not impose any formal constitution upon this company of Christians. We were content to tell them that there was a New Testament, which we had not yet translated, and that it was to be the rule and guide of the Christian Church ; and we left it at that, so that the native Church might develop in its own way according to the African genius. I have watched that little Church grow all through the years ; grow in numbers, culture, activity and influence, until it now numbers about 1,400 members, with something like 200 teachers and evangelists wholly supported by the Church.

In forming this new church we were careful to introduce as little as possible of what might be termed " European." We even had kwanga instead of our white man's bread at the Communion. Since then bread has become a part of the native food, so we use it at the Lord's Table. We also carefully avoided giving the church any name or designation. The native term used has undergone several changes, and finally the word Kamba (a flock) has been generally adopted. The term Baptist has never been used, for we have always been known as the English Mission. The natives are well accustomed to the letters B.M.S., but very few know their significance ! It is interesting to notice that among the natives the initials have been appropriated as a Kongo word " Biemesi," and means " anything in common." It came about in this way. All goods for the Mission are shipped from Europe in cases suitably marked, in clear letters. Our carriers, most of whom can now read, are familiar with the marks. Seeing a case marked H. R. P., they said, " This belongs to Mr. Phillips." T. L.

means that the goods belong to Mr. Lewis. Then they came to the magic words, B.M.S., and finding that there was no missionary with those initials, they said, "Oh, that belongs to all of them. It B.M.S.—all in common!" We are quite satisfied with the deduction, and a second edition of Bentley's Dictionary should include it in its Kongo meaning!

I am glad that I had a share in the formation of this first Church of the Congo Mission, were it only because my Cameroons experience was put to the test. We had the full support of Bentley and all the brethren on the Lower Congo in the principles we then laid down. One of the first rules of the church, assented to by themselves, was that every member, both man and woman, should engage in evangelistic work and make a contribution every Sunday towards the support of the church. No teacher is engaged by the Missionary Society, and every evangelist who gives his full time to the work is paid out of the church funds. The Society bears the expense of training evangelists and teachers, but when they are ready for their work they are passed over to the management and support of the church.

The aim in view is to make the Congo Church self-supporting and self-expanding, until one day it will be able to do without the white man altogether.

CHAPTER XIII

Mostly Concerning Colleagues

One must remember that in this period of the history of the Congo Mission all the missionaries were young and most of them inexperienced. Only four of our number had had any knowledge of another field. Comber and Grenfell had been in the Cameroons, and Silvey and myself followed later from the same place. Comber had already died ; Grenfell was away, exploring the upper regions of the Congo ; Silvey was stationed at Stanley Pool, and died on the way home in 1889. I was, therefore, the only one of the staff at San Salvador with any experience of another established field dealing with native Christians.

I was very young to share in such an important work, and my experience was quite superficial. The three members of the staff had only recently settled at the royal city, and had as yet a very inadequate knowledge of the language. The illness of our comrade, Weeks, and his consequent departure for Europe, was nothing less than a calamity at this critical time. He had a good hold of the language, and was well versed in native lore and the habits of the people, and his presence would have been invaluable at this juncture. But under the circumstances the three youngsters had to do their best. Looking back through the intervening years, I marvel at the mercies of God to us, and the way He kept us from making more serious mistakes than we did.

The four people responsible for the conduct of the

station when the little church of five members was founded in 1887 were Ross Phillips, Carson Graham, Mrs. Lewis and myself, and for thirteen years we remained colleagues at San Salvador. Remembering the history of the Mission, it is a remarkable fact, as I have said, that the three men who formed the first church are still alive.

One of the chief incidents of the year 1888 at San Salvador was the marriage of my colleague, Ross Phillips. According to plan there were to be two weddings on the same day. Two brides had started from England, one to be married to Phillips and the other to Graham. Before they had arrived at Madeira news had reached the Mission House that Graham's health had broken down and that he was on his way home. A message was despatched to bring back Miss Witham to England, while Miss Phillips continued her voyage to Congo. There were difficulties in regard to the marriage of foreigners, and many legal points had to be observed. There was also much red tape among Government officials. To be sure of these matters, the wedding party attended at the Government House to observe the form of a civil marriage according to Portuguese law. The officers wore full uniform, and the two white traders in the town, and a Catholic priest, attended as guests. After the legal function we returned to the Mission Station for the religious ceremony in the chapel, when all the Portuguese guests attended. It was crowded with the town people, who had hitherto never seen a wedding. Two or three days before the wedding, Holman Bentley arrived on a visit from Wathen. He was our senior missionary, and he had a thorough knowledge of the Congo language. Advantage was taken of his presence to give an address to the natives,

explaining the service, and it made a great impression on them all. It was their first lesson on the subject. I then led the bride and bridegroom in the religious part of the marriage ceremony in English, and there was introduced into San Salvador Station the second example of the married life. A year later Graham returned after furlough with his bride, and the missionary staff was considered complete.

I often wonder whether friends in the homeland realise the importance of comradeship in missionary work. Much of the success of the work depends on the spirit of brotherhood among workers. One cannot over-emphasise the necessity for this quality among brethren, and yet there is nothing more difficult to secure. There are many reasons for this, foremost among them the fact that missionaries generally are a strong-minded class of people with determined wills. A young man who aspires to become a missionary is apt to develop self-reliance and an independent spirit. These traits in his character develop rapidly with most of us, and without them the young missionary will not go far. After arriving on the Mission Field he is thrown so much on his own resources that he becomes self-reliant, and gets into the habit of doing things without consulting anyone. The position and circumstances of a young man tend to drive him into a groove of his own making, and sometimes he becomes a crank and a nuisance. Supposing three such men be thrown together, what opportunities there are for misunderstandings, and how the area of friction is enlarged ! If a young man lacks a sufficiency of God's grace to adapt himself to the views and ways of his fellows in non-essentials he will very likely suffer shipwreck before he is far out on the sea of life.

This is why I have never ceased to thank God for

my colleagues at San Salvador, and later on in Zomboland. No three men worked more harmoniously together. We differed widely in opinions and temperament, but each had made up his mind to respect the others. Carson Graham was a Belfast Irishman, Ross Phillips a Gloucestershire Englishman, and myself a Welshman—representatives of three nations always warring against each other. It would be difficult to find three men more unlike, and on matters of doctrine we differed superbly. On the essential points of the religion of Jesus Christ, such as the Divinity of Christ and the Authority of the Scriptures, we were firmly united. On some points we suspected one another, and said so, while on other matters we held diametrically opposed views. Phillips and Graham hailed from Spurgeon's College, and were known there as "The Twins," and so they have continued through life—always remembering that even twins disagree now and again. On such occasions the hot-blooded Welshman loved to fan the flame, and it was interesting to watch the pot boiling until the water bubbled over and automatically put out the crackling fire.

Graham was a great Calvinist of the type of Haldane and Carson (after whom he was named), and his pet occupation was to expound the Letter to the Romans from Calvin's standpoint. At one period he had a great time preaching a series of sermons on this epistle, a series which lasted, if I remember well, for a year and a half. He was all on fire about this subject, and sometimes forgot to stop in time for the evening meal, conduct which resulted in the revolt of Phillips and myself. Phillips was as good a Calvinist as he, but his patience gave way at last, and we both retired from the scene and gave Graham

all the time he required. I fear the result of my friend's preaching, so far as I listened to him, was to confirm me in my Arminianism. One Sunday, having returned from preaching in the villages, it was my turn to take the evening service at the station. Graham was one of my congregation, and he had conducted service in the morning. I took for my text : "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." The burden of my remarks was salvation for all—whosoever will. I knew my colleague did not agree with my preaching, and I pressed my points, perhaps, the harder because of it. When the service was over, he wanted to know why I had preached on that text, for he had spoken on it that morning, and he said I had contradicted nearly everything he had said. So we went over to the house arm in arm and continued our discussion for the rest of the evening ! It was great ! I never met a man who knew his Bible better, and to have the privilege of arguing on a Biblical subject with Graham was equal to years of college training to a man !

Phillips was of a quite different type. He would not argue with anybody on any subject. To him, truth was always clear, and once he had made up his mind there was no room for argument. His own and the world's salvation depended in a great measure on orthodoxy. No doubts ever troubled him, nor were they allowed to come near his dwelling-place. How I envied him !

I wish one of them were here to describe the Welshman, for he, too, had his pet theories and convictions, and loved to ventilate them on occasions. I was very orthodox on most points, and on the

questions of Church Constitution and Close Communion neither of the other two could touch me. So between the three young stalwarts who had the direction of this infant Congo Church at this period there was no danger of the Christians being led astray by every wind of doctrine. I believe that the conflict of years has changed us in many ways, and, although my two friends will not admit it, our theological mind is greatly matured and enlightened, and we have drifted together into the pleasant and quiet paths skirting that beautiful hill in the neighbourhood of the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians.

What has been said of the comradeship among the men was equally applicable to the wives, and the work accomplished by these ladies among the women of Congo cannot be over-estimated. Mrs. Lewis had had some experience among girls in the Cameroons, and she worked on similar lines in Congo. She never troubled about the men or boys, but confined her attention to the women and girls. Mrs. Phillips and Mrs. Graham entered heartily into this work, and carried forward the same traditions. In 1899, Mrs. Phillips received the home-call, and Mrs. Lewis left with me for Zombo, thus leaving Mrs. Graham to lead the work at San Salvador. She laboured there through the years until she and Graham retired from active service. She wielded an influence among the Kongo women which few people have ever realised.

The earliest task of the missionaries was to learn the language. At first there was no book or dictionary to assist the student. The language of the people had not been reduced to writing. The missionaries set to work immediately on their arrival and began to collect words. The foremost and certainly the best linguist was Holman Bentley, who laboured

incessantly in acquiring the speech of the natives. He practically forgot every other duty in his quest for words. He was a wonderful collector of information, and very soon had gathered some thousands of separate words, and had laid the foundation of a Grammar and Dictionary of the Kongo language. When I first arrived at San Salvador nothing had been published, but Bentley's Dictionary was not long in coming.

We had three or four lads who had a smattering of English ; we employed them as interpreters when preaching, and they were our helpers in learning the language. The missionary had one of them always at his side. As their English was strictly limited, we often came against difficulties of a serious nature, and we worked hard to be able to dispense with this mode of communication.

We found the day school work most helpful to the acquirement of the vernacular, and arranged to take school in turns. So when the missionaries were teaching the children to read and write, they themselves were learning the language, and, more important still, learning something about the people and their habits and customs. I well remember the first printed booklet. We had a small hand printing press given to us ; Phillips was made the printer, and very soon cards and pamphlets appeared from our press which were the wonder of the natives. They looked upon the white man's book as a great fetish, full of mystery, but presently the boys themselves were "making books" and the mystery element vanished. Soon passages of Scripture and Bible stories were printed. Phillips was the first to produce a translation of the Book of Jonah ; Mrs. Lewis gave the stories of Elijah and Elisha ;

Cameron, at Wathen, followed with Mark's Gospel ; and Weeks with Matthew. These were all a kind of preliminary venture to the translation of the New Testament by Bentley.

We were slow to trust ourselves to conduct a service without an interpreter, and about two years passed before we attempted to do so, except in the villages and in school. However, one day the Welshman broke through, but he was careful to choose a Sunday when both his colleagues were absent. Really we had been afraid of one another, and it was altogether ridiculous. The interpreters were most unsatisfactory from every point of view. They often misunderstood our English, with the result that all we said was distorted in a hopeless way. We knew enough to know that they often told the congregation things we never uttered. If they did not understand the speaker, they never hesitated to go on and say what they thought would do equally well. Looking back upon this " interpreter age," I wonder that anybody understood our message. After this first attempt all three of us emerged from our shells and, to our great advantage, dispensed with our interpreters. It is most important to master the language in all its details if serious mistakes are to be avoided in mission work.

It was very interesting to watch the difference in the Irishman, Englishman and Welshman in their study of the language. Each one had his own way, and each acquired a style of his own. The Welshman had one or two advantages over his colleagues in this respect. One was in the use of vowels. An Englishman has difficulties in giving a single open sound to a vowel. He generally gives a diphthong sound, especially to the vowels " e " and " o." They

will come out as "ei" and "ow." The Welsh vowels have given the Welsh people a more correct ear to note native sounds taught, in these days, in Schools of Phonetics. Accent is another point in his favour. The Englishman depends to a great extent on his *voice* for emphasis, while the Welshman relies on the position of words in a sentence. Both in Welsh and in the Kongo language the emphatic word is placed at the beginning of the sentence.

This, however, is not meant to imply that I learnt the language quicker or better than my colleagues. That would not be true. Graham excelled in his knowledge of native proverbs and their usage, and Phillips certainly had the best vocabulary. I think I excelled in something, but do not remember exactly what it was !

CHAPTER XIV

The King's Golden Necklace

For many centuries the Kings of Congo and their princes and nobles held sway over a vast kingdom, made laws and administered them at their leisure, used and misused their authority in the most arbitrary way, and were only restrained by the constant fear of an invasion of their kingdom by their fierce enemies, the Yakas from the Kwangu. The Ntotela was held in awe and almost reverential fear by all his subjects, and even when the Mission was established he and his "mbandabanda" were considered the final court of appeal in all matters.

When, in the year 1885, the Portuguese Government appointed a resident governor for San Salvador, this absolute power of the king received a fatal blow, although during the reign of Dom Pedro V very little was done to interfere with his authority. Since then, the Resident hears and decides all important native palavers, and the king's authority is practically superseded. There is still a nominal king, but he is simply a petty official of the Government, so Dom Pedro V may be considered the last reigning sovereign of the Old Kingdom of Congo.

Towards the close of his reign what may be called the last full dress court, or "nkanu," was held before the king.

Such an interesting event can never again occur in this historic and old-world heathen city, and as I spent the best part of three weeks in witnessing,

at intervals, this extraordinary travesty of a "court of justice," I may be permitted to put on record the principal features in the notable case of "Ntangwa *v.* Lavai," heard before Dom Pedro V at San Salvador.

This was a rivalry arising out of the jealousy of two neighbouring chiefs in a district about a day's journey from the capital, and as usual in Congo disputes, it involved a question of slavery. The feud between the two families had been the growth of more than one generation, breaking out periodically into open hostilities, and they never missed an opportunity to insult each other. Many local palavers were held to settle the question, but all in vain. Ntangwa (whose name signifies The Sun) claimed Lavai and his family as his vassals, while Lavai on his part obstinately refused to pay homage to the sublime luminary, or to move in the special orbit appointed for him! So the great Ntangwa, failing locally to prevail on the erratic Lavai to join his system, finally decided to carry the matter to the king of Congo, who was generally looked upon as the lord of creation.

The course of procedure in a Congo law suit is simple and primitive. In this case Ntangwa, the appellant, gathers his clan together, each male contributing what he can in the way of cloth, goats, pigs or fowls, while the women find and prepare the food required. When all is ready, the party don their best clothes and set out for the capital arrayed in gorgeous coloured robes, the chief men wearing old and much worn hats in different stages of decomposition. The cotton parasols which they carry produce an imposing effect as they wend their way in single file through the grass-bound paths. Most of the men carry guns on their shoulders, but a few have

trumpets and ivory horns with which they announce their approach to the capital. They are, of course, expected, and the king's headmen receive them and conduct them to their quarters, where they stay as guests of his majesty. These wily counsellors, with commendable skill and almost canine sagacity, will soon find out what they have brought in the way of goats, pigs and cloth to open the case.

Next morning a messenger is sent to inform them that the king is ready to receive them, and with much blowing of trumpets the procession makes its way into the royal courtyard. In the distance, at the door of his hut, his majesty sits in robes of silk and satin, surrounded by his retinue. The visitors approach in stages, kneeling at short intervals, and paying the usual homage by rubbing their fingers in the dust of the ground and then on the forehead, finishing up with the clapping of hands. After much genuflexion they at last come within about ten yards of his majesty and make their final homage.

Of course, they have brought several demijohns of palm wine, each bottle bearing the cross of palm leaf inserted at the side of the cork. The presentation of palm wine without this cross would be a serious breach of etiquette. The wine, goats and pigs are presented with much ceremony and flattering speeches, but received by the counsellors with grunts of dissatisfaction. The offering is far too small, and the drink would never go round the company. Ntangwa apologises and makes excuses, and after some further haggling his gift is accepted on the understanding that he forthwith sends to procure more of the precious beverage. The next item on the unwritten programme is to deal with the demijohns, which have already been too long neglected,

and they drink as if they had seen no liquid for weeks. The visitors drink sparingly, for they know that during their stay in the city it will be their privilege to supply the drink to scores of thirsty throats. When the bottles are empty his majesty announces that he and his people will do their best to settle the matter in dispute. Ntangwa is then dismissed the royal presence : the trumpet blasts forth its music once more, and the king promises to hear the matter on the morrow.

Ntangwa is no sooner back in the hut apportioned to him than the king's counsellors, secretly and separately, come to offer their services in his cause for a consideration. By this time they know what stock of cloth he has brought with him, and before morning dawns he has been relieved of much of his cotton goods. Next day the king's turn comes, and it is understood that several large pieces of special silk or velvet stuffs are reserved for his majesty. The interviews now become very confidential, occupying their time for over a week, the nights being the busiest. Messengers are dispatched to Ntangwa's town for more drink and goods to make sure of his cause. The appellant is then formally dismissed, and he returns to his town to gather more money for the next stage.

Meanwhile Lavai is communicated with, and summoned to the capital. The whole process of blackmailing to which Ntangwa was subjected is repeated with commendable impartiality in his case, and he is made to believe that both king and counsellors are of one mind, and will decide in his favour. After a week in the hands of these experts he also is dismissed to prepare for the greater fleecing in store for both.

A month later, when the king thinks they have sufficient goods and live stock ready, he sends for both parties, and fixes a day on which to hear their case. In due time they arrive by different routes, bringing with them all the friends they can muster. Friendly chiefs with whom they have an alliance put in an appearance. The women join them this time, for a woman's voice is no negligible quantity in singing, and this is a very important part in a Congo lawsuit. There is keen competition as to which party can produce the greater noise. But the grand prize in this contest is the verdict, and each one knows that it depends on the highest bid. This is competed for in private, mostly under cover of darkness, while the rank and file are cursing each other in songs and dancings all through the night. On the pretence of inquiring into the case and sifting the evidence, his majesty sends for plaintiff and defendant on alternate evenings, for the disputants have not yet met, and each visit makes them poorer by several pieces of cloth. In a week both have been robbed of all their worldly goods as well as of what they had borrowed from friends, and now the king announces that in two days he will commence the public hearing in the Mbazi a Nkanu.

Now begins the popular stage of the trial. No work is attempted, and all interest is centred in the Mbazi a Nkanu. This is a square clearing about fifty yards across, three sides of which consist of a living fence of graceful, tall, poplar-like trees about a foot or eighteen inches apart, while the remaining side is open to the main road, on the opposite side of which stand the Roman Catholic Church and Mission buildings. In the centre of the square is a large shady tree called "yala-nkuwu" ("the

spreading of the mats") sacred to palaver places in Congoland, and admirably suited for the purpose on account of the excellent shelter it affords. At the end, near the entrance to the royal dwelling, there is erected a temporary platform slightly raised from the ground, and covered with rugs and carpets of glaring colours, several leopard skins adding materially to the general effect. On the platform one recognises the great arm-chair, which is the throne of his sable highness, brought out for the occasion, displaying in tawdry gilt tinsels the Royal Arms of Portugal. Beside it is placed an ordinary bentwood chair for the accommodation of his consort. No other seat is provided, for no other person is permitted to sit on a chair in the presence of royalty. His counsellors squat on mats on the ground.

About nine o'clock on the opening day the contending parties, under the direction of some of the counsellors, arrange themselves on opposite sides of the square, on the right and left: the loungers and curious spectators take up their position in the open space opposite the king's throne. His majesty has not yet arrived, but this does not matter. No sooner do the two disputants, with their respective supporters, take their places, and are thus for the first time brought face to face, than they begin to hurl insults at each other in song, to the accompaniment of drums, horns and various torturing native instruments. They soon work up their feelings into frenzy, and the fun begins. It is a bloodless battle of wit and invective. All is well arranged and managed, and each party takes turn in a most methodical manner. Much skill and readiness in repartee are necessary, and it is here that a native orator or counsel is generally secured. The language used in "talking

palaver" is quite out of the common run, and the proceedings are mainly conducted in parables, which to an European seem absolutely rubbish, but to the native mind strike home with unerring precision.

The dancing and shouting continue incessantly until a blast of a trumpet from the palace yard announces the fact that his majesty is on his way to the court. All eyes are turned in his direction, and soon we see the huge form of Dom Pedro V moving towards us in the glory of a specially made military uniform, surmounted by a cocked hat with red feathers. Two native attendants are endeavouring in vain to hold in position a large tent umbrella of brilliant colours, which has a constant tendency to become entangled in the branches above. The King is followed by the Queen, also got up, regardless of taste, in European dress, her gown trimmed with lace, and a dirty straw hat for a headgear. The girl attendants carry a small cotton umbrella, intended to protect her dusky complexion from the sun when it appears.

The counsellors rush to and fro making way for their august master, and when finally his bulky majesty is successfully deposited on the throne all the drums, bugles and horns, together with hundreds of throats, proclaim him "NEKONGO NTINU A LUKENI," while the "mbandabanda" prostrate themselves before him and pay their dutiful homage. The chief counsellor bears the proud title of "Kapitau" and he figures very prominently in all ceremonies. To-day he is more drunk than usual. I never saw him sober except once during a severe illness, but he knows his duties as captain, and starts a song in honour of his master, and begins to dance.

The king's retainers take up the refrain, and soon they are joined by all sections of the crowd. Kapitau's

steps get somewhat confused, and once or twice he overbalances himself and comes to grief, much to the amusement of the audience. He finally collapses and retires with unsteady steps amidst yells of derision and laughter. Others now step forward with eulogistic songs and dance, the two disputants especially vying with each other to make a good impression and win royal favour. An hour or more is given to this wild but innocent play. Yet through it all there is a strict adherence to etiquette and formalities. No one makes a speech, however short, or starts a song or dance, without first saluting the king, and at the close every speaker or performer falls on his knees and pays the customary homage. The slightest departure from correct procedure is very quickly brought home to any culprit.

After a while the contending parties are requested to attend to the business in hand, and for that day the glorification of the king is dispensed with.

Ntangwa, a short, beshrivelled little man, notwithstanding his high-sounding name, conducts his own case. He has a rasping voice, which is against him, but he dances well and is perfectly self-confident. Lavai is a quiet, unassuming man and has employed a counsel to " plead " for him. Poor man ! Everybody knows he is to be pitied and is quite innocent of all blame in the palaver : but that has nothing to do with the Congo sense of justice. When the first din and clatter of the drums and trumpets has subsided, and the contending factions have squatted in their assigned places, Ntangwa jumps up, arranging carelessly a long and gorgeously-coloured cloth over his shoulders and around his waist, and sporting a skin of the leopard cat as a badge of his chieftainship. He walks out to the centre, makes two or three

flourishing strides, then returns and faces his followers, chanting in a low monotone a Congo parable in praise of himself and his superiority over a certain nameless party. The company takes up the strain, Ntangwa dancing to the music of trumpets and drums, and all keep time by clapping hands. The instruments beat louder and faster—the dancer rushes here and there performing very creditable gymnastic feats : he starts across the square and advances close up to his enemy, making most insulting gestures and facial contortions. Still the music bursts forth faster and louder from the other side of the quadrangle, when all of a sudden Ntangwa performs half a dozen of his special strokes in the air. The music stops abruptly, and the dancer falls on his face before the chair of the king, to whom he pays homage. The audience is delighted, and shouts its approval after the fashion of an excited crowd at a football match.

Now that the combatants are, figuratively speaking, at each other's throats, we get very little breathing time. Ntangwa is not half-way back to his place before Lavai's counsel steps out into the arena, and salutes. He is a fine-looking man, six feet high, with a commanding presence. He starts a parable in song, and his contingent takes it up, and drums and trumpets join in as before. His dancing is greatly admired, and the retort in his reply to the jeers of his adversary is much relished. It was a play on Ntangwa's name, with reference to the clouds covering the face of the sun. Then follows a capital piece of acting. Dancing furiously while the others sing and clap, he shades his eye with his shoulder cloth, and pretends to examine the sky. He searches everywhere in vain for the imaginary luminary, and examines the leafy branches of the great tree above him. Still

unsuccessful, he comes up to Ntangwa and his friends, stares into their faces and makes a lengthened examination of Ntangwa's countenance, shading his eyes with his hands. The singers shout "The sun is hidden by the clouds," the pace of the music quickens, the dancer returns to the centre, and facing the king far outshines his opponent in his bold leaps into mid-air : then he suddenly stops, salutes and retires. The excitement is enormous, and the play is kept going, without an interval, until five o'clock in the evening.

The dancing is not restricted to the talkers : there is always a good supply of qualified men and women who are ever ready to take part in the performance. Neither is it confined to the disputants and their sympathisers, for often some of the king's men will intervene with a parable to rebuke one of the parties in the suit ; or sometimes to stir up the anger of both, and thus enliven the proceedings. Certainly to-day they have succeeded well, for by the time they separate for the night both parties are in a towering rage. It is always the custom in these palavers for the king to dismiss one party before the other, and lodge them in different quarters at some distance apart. This is well, for they are armed with loaded guns and various offensive weapons, and should they accidentally meet in their present state of mind some mischief will be sure to follow. As it is they have to relieve their suppressed anger by spending the greater part of the night in dancing, and now and then firing into the air volleys from their flint guns. Every beat of the drum and every note of the trumpet is charged with curses and invectives well understood by all. The young folk and the women are the principal actors in these nightly orgies. Our mission buildings happen to be situated between the two main quarters of the

town, so we are in the direct line of the firing. The nights are made hideous by the noise, and we get little or no sleep until we become used to it.

While the partisans dance and shout, the principals are busy receiving visits from the king's counsellors, and discussing with them the ways and means of raising money for the expenses of the court. The emissaries of his majesty suggest some boys and girls being put in pawn to somebody who is willing to advance cloth at exorbitant interest. Such pressure is brought to bear upon them that they have no choice but to obey, and they have the further satisfaction of knowing that this is only a beginning.

Next day arrives. Both judge and jury are in good spirits, having profited largely by the night's negotiations, and the whole day is spent in the same way as the previous one. I ask a native standing by my side who acts as my interpreter if they are not going to argue the case or give some evidence. He explains that this is the argument, and the evidence is to come later on. I am bewildered at his view of the case, and do the only possible thing—wait and see.

On the following day my education in "law" proceeds, and I am astonished at the appearance on the scene of a long and heavy iron chain, between forty and fifty feet in length, no doubt used hundreds of times in leading slave gangs to the coast. It is now borne shoulder high by half a dozen of the king's men to the palaver ground, where it is exhibited and carried round the square, the bearers dancing and singing suitable songs. They call it "The King's Golden Necklace," and congratulate the happy people who are to have the honour of wearing it. With due ceremony the Golden Necklace is laid in its full length on the ground, and my mind becomes haunted by a

vision of ghastly possibilities. Where is it all to end? Surely they cannot enslave men in this bare-faced manner, when the Portuguese Resident, the representative of law and order, is looking on from the veranda of the Catholic Mission? I begin to take a more serious interest in the proceedings, and watch carefully for developments. The crowd is all alert with eager expectation, and evidently enjoying themselves in the anticipation of something unusual. This morning a decided gloom has settled on the faces of the disputants and their friends, and the dancing and singing are left mainly to the bloodsuckers by the side of the king.

Soon, however, the audience shows signs of impatience, and all eyes are turned in the direction of Ntangwa, who is in the position of prosecutor in the case. While he holds a hurried consultation with some of his friends and advisers, one of the "mbanda-banda" gets up and "obliges the company with a dance"—this simply to fill in the time.

Then Ntangwa rises, assumes a nonchalant air of a man perfectly at his ease, and comes forward, followed by three young men of his town, the latter taking up their position kneeling by the much glorified chain, while their master with great pomp and ceremony hands them over to be kept in bond till the close of the trial. If he wins his case they will be released, if he is worsted then those in the "Golden Necklace" become slaves, and will be disposed of at the pleasure of his sable highness. In response to this most agreeable little presentation Kapitau struggles out to favour the "house" with one of his unsteady performances. In the meantime his delighted colleagues are busily engaged in fitting the royal badge of honour around the necks of their victims. With what delight they

finger the links ! They have not been able to chain men in public like this for some years past. It is like a taste of blood to a half-tamed tiger. One can see the grin of satisfaction on their dusky countenances, and there is a look of insatiable passion about them.

But the audience is anxious to see how Lavai is going to act, for, according to native custom, he must produce the same number of men as his accuser. He is already prepared for this, and as soon as there is a lull in the dancing, he and his counsel lead their three men into the centre and present them at the altar of Congo justice.

The king's counsellors renew their dances, taking care to stir up the jealousies of both parties, with the result that the rest of the day is spent in a furious combat of insulting parables. The court rises well satisfied with the day's work, but the combatants go away with heavy hearts and sad forebodings, and the nightly cursing is more bitter than ever. I thought surely the case would be hastened on a bit, and on the morrow I fully expected to hear a little Congo pleading, but I was doomed to another disappointment. The first thing, after the preliminary gymnastic ceremonies, was an announcement by the king that after consulting his faithful advisers he considered that the number of men handed over to the court was too small. He explained that this was a great occasion, and a great trial : the two wealthy chiefs before him must bring more persons to wear the royal decoration.

Now in these quarrels of petty chiefs the great object is to entice the head of the family to give himself over to the chain, and thus secure the whole of the clan as slaves. When, by intrigue, the wily

counsellors have persuaded Ntangwa to offer himself with three more of his family for the chain, the excitement is tremendous, and Lavai's heart almost fails him. There is nothing for it but that he must do likewise. He knows it is a trap laid for him : nevertheless he must walk into it. Goaded by taunts from the other side, he walks out with his three men and presents himself to the king. A second chain is now necessary to secure the twelve men, but the chiefs are allowed to remain free to conduct their case. The chained men are lodged in the king's compound at night and brought out every morning to attend the court, but they take no part in the proceedings.

I asked my companion what would happen if Lavai refused to give himself up. He replies, " Oh, then the palaver is settled against him ; he acknowledges guilt before all the people."

This final step having been taken by both chiefs, there is nothing more to gain : even the avarice of an African monarch has its limitations ; and on the following day what may be called the hearing of the arguments is proceeded with. Here there is no fumbling of carefully-tied packets of papers in search of documentary evidence to prove an accusation, not even a formal receipt for money paid in any business transaction. Ntangwa in his speech had only to tell a fairly plausible tale of how some four or five generations back one of Lavai's forebears was bought at a distant market by his great-great-great maternal uncle : he tells his story with the ease of a man who cannot tell a lie, takes it up point by point, and his retainers shout their approval. Each point is emphasised by a song and a dance. When he has made one statement he turns round and chants before his men a parable which they take up and sing.

This gives him time to breathe, while some man or woman comes forward to dance, thus bearing witness to the truth of the statement made. In Congo, witnesses sing and dance their evidence, and are never subjected to the indignity of a cross-examination—a most convenient arrangement for them! Lavai and his counsel are constantly on the alert, and when there is anything they specially object to, one of them immediately springs to his feet and intervenes with a parable, either giving a direct denial to what has been said, or intimating that he will explain it when his turn comes. At times the excitement is intense.

Over and over again Ntangwa is interrupted with vehement denials from the other side, one opposing witness after another jumping to the front to deny the accusation and hurl parabolical invectives across at him. At these interruptions the dancing is furious, for the dancers themselves are extremely excited. Scenes like this are much relished by the crowd, who add to the general confusion by yelling and screaming their approval or disapproval, as the case may be. When the storm wears itself out, Ntangwa proceeds with his narrative, and entertains the court for five days or so, when the interest begins to flag and there are shouts of impatience from the king's men. So, with a few well-directed hits at his enemy, he retires, evidently proud of his oratorical performances.

Next morning Lavai's counsel opens the case for the defence. His portly figure towers above the heads of his companions as he approaches the glittering throne upon which the royal dispenser of justice sits in flowing garments, for the military uniform of the opening day disappeared on the second morning, and a more suitable costume was substituted. After paying the customary homage he returns to his joke

about the "sun after spasmodically shining for five days, once more hiding himself behind a cloud." He is wise enough not to follow this too far, and forthwith plunges into his task. With a long spear in his hand, a fine leopard skin dangling in front with the tail trailing on the ground, and with an extra long patchwork velvet cloth flowing from his shoulders, he performs one of his most elaborate exercises. His movements are so nimble and quick that he keeps the skin and cloth in constant whirling motion, and when he reaches the climax one realises that the "skirt dance" of Europe is of African origin. Then he suddenly comes to a standstill in a stooping position facing Ntangwa and glaring at him like a wild beast.

He stands thus for a full minute, then flourishes his spear aloft, swings it round his head, and finally drives it into the ground with a stamp of the foot as much as to say, "This is how I will deal with you." After this a counsellor executes a tame dance to give the pleader breathing time. Then he commences his four-days' speech and things settle down into the usual monotonous drone, enlivened, however, now and then by a scene. When counsel winds up his oration with a final dance it is clear that he is very tired. By this time he is a great favourite with the spectators, but all know that the case will be decided against him.

During the next two days the king and his advisers are supposed to be considering the verdict: on the third day they go in conclave to a spot about a mile away to arrange its final form. Our dusky brothers are very particular in these little formalities. In the afternoon there is much blowing of trumpets and beating of drums, and the firing of guns on the outskirts of the town heralds the return of the court: a

few minutes later Dom Pedro V is seated in all his royal glory on his gilded throne, and the palaver square is crowded to hear the result of the "deliberation." Even at this stage the dancing cannot be dispensed with, and the songs are all in honour of the king. We notice that two or three of the counsellors are absent from their places; they are those who opposed the decision of the majority, and they have left "in anger." They had "eaten" freely of Lavai's money, and wanted to impress upon him that they did not betray his cause! We did not hear that their tender consciences bade them return the cloth they had accepted from their victim!

The announcement of the verdict by his majesty is only a matter of form, and is hailed with delighted shrieks by Ntangwa and his friends, who fire off guns triumphantly all the rest of the evening. His six men are released and given back to him; while those of Lavai's family are kept in the "Golden Necklace." Somehow Lavai himself (supposed to have given himself up) manages to get away unmolested. He has found some friends in need. The writer is not supposed to know anything about this, but he closes the chapter assuring his readers that Lavai still thrives in his native town, and not many months passed before he was welcoming back to his family the six heroes of the "Golden Necklace."

CHAPTER XV

Developments of the Native Church

The founding of the native church was a definite step forward in the history of the Mission, and from this time the missionaries had to apply themselves to a number of new problems. Hitherto, our work had been purely evangelistic in its character, and the chief aim had been to open up the country and reach as many districts as possible. This has always been kept in the forefront of all our activites. But now there were other duties in connection with the infant church which required the constant attention of the missionary. We had to plan for its development as an evangelistic force in the land. We baptized converts nearly every month, but they were illiterate, and had only just come out of heathenism. We had to deal with the raw material and mould it into shape. My brethren and I had to turn to educating the Church members. Mrs. Lewis opened a class for women, and soon two of the King's wives were baptized and joined the Church. When later Mrs. Phillips and Mrs. Graham arrived the women's work grew apace, and soon the majority in the church were women. Since then the San Salvador church shares with Kibokolo the honour of having the preponderance of women on its church roll—a state of affairs of which we are proud.

The growth of the church brought us up against the great problems of African Missions. Our position in regard to Slavery and Polygamy had to be

considered before forming the church. The questions had been discussed and argued among the senior men for years, and we had the valued opinions of Comber, Bentley and others to guide us. Rightly or wrongly, it was decided not to make any hard or fast rules on any of these difficult questions, but to deal with each case on its own merits. There was no difficulty about the slave trade, for nobody could be allowed and nobody desired to buy or sell slaves, but when it came to the system of domestic slavery we found that could not be objected to on the same grounds. Two of our first converts had slaves. If they turned them away the poor wretches would still be slaves, without protection. So these two men were taught in the principles of the Epistle to Philemon, and their slaves were adopted as members of the family. They enjoyed all the privileges and protection of the family and were married to the daughters of the clan, thus becoming free men.

Polygamy presented many more difficulties, and again we decided on a middle course. The same two men, Dom Miguel and Matoko, had two and four wives respectively. They were all getting on in age, and had children. To send the women away and break up the family relations we thought to be wrong. They were told that they must keep their present wives and care for them, but they must not add another to the number. It is the custom in Congo for old men to discard their elderly women and take to themselves young girls. As missionaries, we had to fight against this evil custom, and therefore could not tell our converts that the first thing they must do was to put away their old wives. But we only applied this principle to old people. A younger man, if he had married two wives, would be

told to choose one and let the other go. That was no hardship to anybody, and we saw to it that the other woman was suitably matched to another man. Sentiment and love held very subordinate positions among Congos in those days.

Nevertheless, we were by this flank movement winning all along the line in the battle against this most degrading African institution. We considered each case on its merit, with the result that polygamy has not only disappeared from the native Church, but has lost its status and respectability among the heathen themselves. There were differences of opinion among African missionaries on this vexed question, and no one could be more conscious of the risk than the three young missionaries at San Salvador. The situation demanded our constant vigilance, and the care of the church was no sinecure.

These cases of aged polygamists in the church were very few, and I believe never exceeded three or four in number. The whole influence of the church was against plurality of wives. Indeed, the Mission as a whole stood out prominently on this subject. I remember one day discussing methods with Padre Baroso, who became afterwards the Bishop of Mozambique, and later of Oporto. He was open-minded and devoted to the African. He said that we Protestants had one great advantage over the priests of his Church in work among Africans. "You can raise a body of native missionaries who can be full pastors of your church. We cannot make full priests of the natives because they will not live a celibate life. You also come out married, and you introduce by your example the Christian ideal of family life. You have your wife with you now, and in a short time Mr. Graham and Mr. Phillips will each have

SAN SALVADOR CHURCH *(left)* AND SCHOOL HOUSE.

Facing page 1

his wife, and the Congo children and people living on your station will watch you. It is a new thing to them, this one man one wife. They will copy your example, and were you to do nothing else save live the family life in the midst of this people, you will have more influence on the community than we can ever hope to have. If we bring out women teachers, they will be Sisters only, while you are living the Christian family life." All this is true and needs no comment.

We naturally initiated the Christian marriage in the church. If a man with one wife became converted he would be required to marry her in the church. If the wife of a heathen man became a church member we accepted her, even if she were one of a crowd. Before King Dom Pedro died at least five of his wives were Christians. When their husband was dead, they were all joined in holy matrimony to monogamists. Two of them, under the new conditions, were made deacons of the church, and were among the most capable and honoured officers we had.

The first wedding among these natives was that of two of our scholars. Kivitidi (John Hartland's boy) was the bridegroom, and Tomba, one of the school-boarders, was the bride. We made it a very important affair and prepared a big feast. The chapel was crowded. It was my privilege to explain to the congregation what it all meant, and it was a long sermon. The ceremony was not a long one. The old bamboo chapel was decorated with palms and flowers, and an avenue of palm fronds was made all the way from the Station to the nice little hut built by Kivitidi himself and to which he led his bride, followed by the crowd of school children. When

we took back the Mission children to the Station groups of townsfolk came up to make fun of them because they had followed the white man's fashion. "Look, look, Kivitidi has promised not to take another wife. Ha! ha! Going to live with one woman only." Wherever he went the people sneered and ridiculed him. But in a month's time we had a double wedding, and on this occasion one of the brides was the daughter of Mfutila, Dom Pedro's successor on the throne. She was married to Vita, one of our teachers. Perhaps that accounted for the absence of ridicule. At any rate, weddings became quite common, and the "one wife town" increased rapidly.

The ladies of the Station now found a fresh field for their energies, for they continued the supervision of their old girls. They had been prepared for motherhood, and when the babies arrived the most scrupulous care was taken of them, with the result that the village became alive with healthy children. A registry of births was started, and in the course of years this care for the children had developed into the magnificent Child Welfare Department of the present day. Infant mortality is shockingly high among the natives in general, but for some years the loss of a baby was unknown among these Christians. They were the envy of the heathen, and the polygamists realised that the one wife fashion was good for securing a strong and large family.

I need hardly say that undesirable scenes were witnessed in this Christian village sometimes, notably disputes between husbands and wives. On these not rare occasions we men were called in as peacemakers! We generally allowed the storm to wear itself out, so that nothing was left unsaid to rankle in the mind

afterwards. On the whole, these bursts of passion acted as safety-valves, and there was generally a smile and a good supper at the end.

There was one couple who caused me much anxiety and concern, for the husband had on several occasions been guilty of beating his wife, and I knew that he was wholly at fault. One evening I heard the loud shrieks of a woman from the direction of their house, and as I thought he was really killing her this time, I hurried across to rescue her from his clutches. I rushed into the house and into the inner room, and saw the sight of my life. There stood the tall figure of the wife, her dress torn to pieces from her body, gripping her husband by the scruff of his neck, holding him at arm's length, and all the time pummelling him with her right hand. I stood aghast, but leaned against the door and waited to see the end. It was the last battle in that household.

Now all this was definite church work, and such quarrels and misdemeanours were always approached from the church point of view. There is a vast difference between the life of a simple evangelistic itinerant and that of a missionary who tries to build up a church with such raw material. How many missionaries cry out to God in their agonies, and thank Him for the Corinthian Church which nearly broke the heart of the Apostle Paul! Yet in spite of that terrible record of disappointment and failure—or was it because of it?—Paul was lifted to such great heights of faith that he could write to them that wonderful thirteenth chapter on Love. It has always been true that the more sorrow and disappointment we have experienced with erring souls the more intensely we love them. Oh, dark Corinthians of Cameroons and Congo, how I love you still!

The heart of this small church beat true to the evangelistic idea. In less than twelve months from its formation the members were discussing the question of appointing one of their number as teacher and evangelist, and Kivitidi, who was specially attached to Mr. Hartland, was set apart. Etoto became the first sub-station, but after about four years a palaver in the district upset everything, and the place had to be abandoned for a time. Then two other village schools were established, and Nlekai became teacher at Mbanza Mputu. The chief Mbumba was converted and baptized. He carried the title of Nosso Principe (our Prince) and was the rightful successor of the King of Kongo. His becoming a Protestant Christian put him out of the running for that honour, but he gladly gave up all claim to the throne for the sake of Christ. He had been a notoriously cruel chief, and his conversion and changed life were a great help to the cause of Christ. Though he was an old man he worked hard for the Kingdom. When later, in 1899, we established our Zombo Mission, he was carried by his men all the way to use his influence upon the Nkusu people, who were of the same clan as himself. We had, therefore, a number of influential men and women in the church who were all very active, and the contributions kept steadily on the increase.

As an example of their generosity, when the membership was only about fifty they made a collection of £33 14s. 3d. towards the Centenary Fund of our Baptist Missionary Society. One Sunday afternoon the missionaries had been talking about the Centenary celebrations in Kettering, and the young men spontaneously started a special collection. Matoko headed the list of subscriptions by contributing a pig and

a piece of cloth. The final touch was given when on New Year's Day we held a Thanksgiving Service, and the little bamboo chapel was packed with enthusiastic people.

The following year they made a similar collection, and sent it to their old friend Mr. Dixon, who had been transferred to the China Mission. Thus they took the world into their field of vision, and were linked with the cause in other lands.

The work was getting more and more interesting every month, and this was particularly noticed in the schools which had been established for boys and girls. At the end of the first year we had a number who could read, and the question of literature in the vernacular had become a vital one. Small reading books were printed, and each of us, with native help, translated portions of Scripture to teach to the young folk, and also to be read at our Sunday services. Graham went first on furlough, then Mr. and Mrs. Phillips followed. In the meantime we had the help of Mr. and Mrs. Moolenaar, Percy Comber, and Harry White—the last on his first term in Congo. Moolenaar was specially gifted for evangelistic work, and did a lot of itineration in the district, which had been sadly neglected.

When Graham and Phillips had both returned, Mrs. Lewis and myself had to go on our furlough, about the end of 1890. I remember nothing about this visit to the homeland, but I find that we were at Cameroons on the 13th of August, 1891, on our return to Congo, writing to Mr. Baynes about the native church and its activities. We were back at our beloved San Salvador before the beginning of the rainy season in October.

CHAPTER XVI

Building a Mission Station

The housing question occupied very little of the attention of the first pioneers. The first Mission House at San Salvador was built of stone, and was intended to serve many generations of missionaries. The best one could say about the house was that it had a fine beehive grass roof which successfully kept out both rain and light, and a fine earth floor. There were many advantages in having an earth floor, but some drawbacks : the boys who washed the crockery threw all the dirty water on it, and when we had the luxury of a kippered herring for breakfast, thanks to the earth floor we retained the odour for at least six days, or until something else of equal potency was selected for a meal ! Anyway, the floor had to be watered before it could be swept, and the result was a dampness that became very unhealthy.

Graham and Phillips lived in this big house while Mrs. Lewis and I occupied a small grass hut built among the cathedral ruins. There were an outer and an inner room, and, of course, an earth floor. For generations past the kings and great men of Congo had been buried in the precincts of this cathedral. I had fixed up a wooden couch in the outer room, and coming in about midday one day from work, I threw myself down heavily upon it, with the result that the couch and myself disappeared into one of the graves ! I declined to accept the royal hospitality that time, got up, filled the hole with

earth, refixed my couch, and we lived there for five months longer.

The site granted to the Mission by the King extended some two hundred yards from the monastery wall, and I decided to build a small bungalow at that end, away from the ruins. The chief point was to have a raised boarded floor three or four feet from the ground to allow the fresh air to blow through. With the help of the school lads and one Coast man I gathered stones enough to build the foundation up to the level of the flooring, and then built the walls of clay. It was well mixed, as for making bricks, and laid on the stone wall in layers of a foot thick. It dried quickly, and the cracks were filled in as the work proceeded. A final plaster of ashes and the earth from ant hills made it look smart. The walls were two feet thick, and the roof was of native wood and bamboo, covered with galvanised iron sheeting. The whole cost was under a hundred pounds. Last month my old friend Ross Phillips, writing from San Salvador, announced that he had just returned to his old station, and added : "You will like to know that I am settled down in your old house, still easily the most comfortable house in the station."

Practically all the building was left for me to do. While I was building my own bungalow, bricks were being prepared for my colleagues' houses. By the next dry season the materials were ready for two semi-detached dwellings which were completed in time for the return of Mr. and Mrs. Graham from their furlough. Mr. and Mrs. Phillips had already occupied theirs, and the old Mission House had been turned into a store.

Then came the building of new Barter Stores,

Dispensary, Printing office, and an office for the transaction of business. Houses for the boy and girl boarders were built near the bungalows of the missionaries, where supervision could be exercised. These additions made it a new station and moved it away from the shadows of the cathedral ruins into the open, a great improvement in every way. It took ten years to accomplish this transformation, but none of the spiritual work was neglected. My colleagues relieved me from school work while I attended to station building.

All this was industrial work in its most practical form. I got rid of the Coast workmen as soon as possible, for I found them unwilling to teach our Congo lads. I therefore took these in hand myself. We had a brickyard, a carpenter's shed and, of course, a blacksmith's shop. During these ten years we had learnt a great deal. While on furlough I found out all I could about making bricks and building, and attended classes in plumbing at the Northern Polytechnic for three months. My boys regarded me as wonderful, and thought that I could do anything! They did not know the labour necessary to keep myself in advance of them.

It was my great ambition in San Salvador to train the boys in the various trades, that together we might build a House of God of native material, without any outside help. These ten years were the preparation for that. Weeks had built a very serviceable bamboo chapel with grass roof, which served the Mission for about twelve years, but it was getting too small for our congregations, and was much out of repair. Now we had to do something more, and after much thought and some misgivings we decided to make the attempt.

It was a question for the Church to decide, for it was to be built entirely at their expense. For several years they had been collecting towards it, and a number of the younger men had been busy cutting down trees in the forest. They had to go some distance from San Salvador to get the right kind of timber, and it had to be seasoned. The membership was only 124 when it was decided to venture on the building scheme, and there was a clear understanding that there was to be no debt.

I had made out the plans, which had to be adapted to the length of timber obtainable in the district. The old Mission House and part of the monastery wall standing within our grounds were demolished, but the stones were not enough for our purpose, so we dug up the foundations of the old city wall to make up the deficiency. Our chief difficulty was mortar. There were lime rocks several miles away, but too far for us to work. I made many experiments with ant hills and ashes to obtain a substitute, and found nothing satisfactory. At last I decided to use ant hills for mortar, and trust to locking the stones right through.

In the early months of 1898 we had dug the foundation trenches and filled them with stone work. A few loads of cement from Matadi had to be purchased to make the corners secure. By April the walls were three feet above ground level, and on Easter Monday special services were held to lay the Memorial Stones. Men and women came from the sub-stations, and there was much excitement, for all were keenly interested in the new House of God. We were in need of some binding slab stone which could only be had in the Luezi valley, and I suggested that every man, woman and child should fetch one stone

each and lay it on the ground as his or her permanent share in the building. The appeal gripped their imagination, and not only did our adherents bring stones, but many of the people who had nothing to do with us joined in, and to our surprise the King himself went down at the head of a group of his people and carried his stone. During the preceding week people were seen going down to the stream to bring up stones, and there was hardly a house in San Salvador without a stone or two, according to the number of the family, all waiting for the day. On Sunday morning when I announced the special services on Monday there was round after round of applause, and it was some time before I could get sufficient quiet to dismiss them.

At this time A. G. Adams had just come out to join the Congo Mission, and he marshalled this army of stone-carriers. Indeed, he was the live wire all through the proceedings of the day. Adams had arranged a pleasant surprise for us all. We were on the scene when the bell rang, and were a little puzzled by the absence of the school and the leading members of the church. However, we had not long to wait for the explanation. From the distance came the strains of a hymn, boys' and men's voices singing, "All hail the power of Jesus' name," in Kongo. In a minute or two we saw a long procession of boys and men, with Adams bringing up the rear, each carrying a stone on his head. They came in at the entrance to the Station, and on reaching the site they put down their stones and then lustily sang on until the hymn was finished.

When quiet was secured the meeting commenced with prayer, followed by the reading of the story of Solomon preparing for the Temple. Phillips

spoke about the labours of the early missionaries, especially of the visit of Comber and Grenfell, whose initials were carved on a tree a few yards from where we were standing.

We regretted the absence on furlough of Mr. and Mrs. Graham, for it would have been good to have the three missionaries together, as at the formation of the Church. Mrs. Ross Phillips and Mrs. Lewis formally laid the two memorial stones, with the date and their initials roughly chiselled thereon. After the ladies had declared the foundations "well and truly laid," the choir sang the special dedication hymn. In a bottle sealed and enclosed in cement behind each stone will be found a copy of our monthly magazine, *Ngonde ya ngonde*, in which appears the whole history of the establishment and development of the San Salvador Church, and of the building of this chapel. The trowels, which I had the honour of presenting to the ladies, were the product of the station workshop, and were made out of a kerosene drum and a piece of garden fork. The handle was taken from a dagger knife from the Barter Store.

After the ceremony, gifts towards the building fund were brought and laid on the foundation stones, and there is nothing that the Congo people enjoy more than a collection. The tiny children in their mothers' arms were given a few beads to swell the total. The service was closed by singing a translation of "O'er the gloomy hills of darkness" to the old tune "Calcutta," and Adams pronounced the Benediction.

And now two rather important episodes in my life overlap in point of history, for just as I was in the full swing of the building of the new church a letter came from the Mission House in London

asking me to make a prospecting tour of the Zombo country, with a view to establishing a new station farther inland. The dry season was coming on, and this journey had to be taken soon, or postponed for a year. Fortunately, the men could go on with the preparation of needed material for two or three months, and in the beginning of June, my wife and I left on the journey to be described in the next chapter.

After the return from that eventful journey I pressed on with all the strength at my command with chapel building. I had the side roofing fixed over the outer walls before the rains started, and the whole roof was ready by the new year. The raw material in the way of workmen was improving in many ways, but when we began scaffolding work I had the greatest trouble of my life. I could not induce anybody to work on the planks. Then the black man's love of talking while at work necessitated the pulling down of badly done work. Several times my chief mason, Nekaka, struck work because I insisted on it being properly done. It was when the Gothic arches of the windows were made that the fun came. The proper cradles and framework were all right, and they fixed the stones in their places with a feeling that all was well, but when I asked them to hold the wood-work while I knocked out the wedges they all refused to stay anywhere near, and I had to do the first one alone! After that, things improved, and in a few weeks they were very proud of themselves, and I think quite forgave me for my strict supervision.

The pulpit was made of native mahogany, and together with the baptistery in front of it was the gift of the missionaries on the staff, in memory of those who had died, and had at one time or another

laboured at the station. They were Tom and Minnie Comber, John S. Hartland, A. Cowe, S. Silvey and W. F. Wilkinson, with another name, that of Mrs. Phillips, added on a separate plate. The Communion Table was given by Ross Phillips and his children in memory of Mrs. Phillips, and the chairs by Lawson and Mrs. Forfeitt, who took much interest in the work.

In June, 1899, a second journey to Zombo retarded the progress of the builders, and I consult the convenience of my readers as well as myself if I close the chapter with a short reference to the opening ceremonies, which took place in September.

Nobody had taken more interest in the building of the chapel than Mrs. Ross Phillips, but she was called home before its completion. I give short extracts from a letter which my wife wrote home at the time.

"Mrs. Phillips was very unwell all last week, and on Sunday, the 23rd, fever appeared, which continued in spite of all efforts to subdue it. She became much worse on Tuesday, and we began to fear for her. From that time till Wednesday afternoon we did everything for her, but although we were able to allay the distressing symptoms the inward fever remained, and at 1.45 p.m. on the 26th of April (1899) she passed peacefully away. Mrs. Phillips was conscious to within an hour of her death. She was able to speak to us words of faith and hope, and to send loving messages to all the dear ones at home, and to the women and children here. At first she grieved at the thought of not seeing her little ones again, and of their childish sorrow when they would learn that Mother would come home no more. She had taken such an interest in the building of the

new chapel, and the day before she died she asked if it were possible for her to go and look at it. On Wednesday, when Mr. Lewis came into the room, she said, 'Ah, I shall not see that bonny chapel after all.' She spoke, too, of the work to which we hope to go in Zombo, and thought she would be able to see us there."

When it became known that Mrs. Phillips was dangerously ill the people evinced the greatest concern. The women refused to go to their farms and kept watch outside the house. The sorrow and the sympathy of the people were remarkable. The boys and I made the coffin inside the new chapel, and next morning six of the station boys carried her first into the old chapel, where a service was held, and then to the cemetery. The Portuguese Resident, the Catholic priests, the traders, were all there. So passed away the first of the happy band of workers on the San Salvador staff, one of the quietest and most unobtrusive workers I have ever met. The six of us had laboured together for thirteen years, and Mrs. Phillips's death hung like a cloud over all our opening services.

Mr. and Mrs. Graham had just returned from their furlough, bringing with them Mr. Bowskill, a new missionary, to be associated with them in the work at San Salvador. Mr. and Mrs. Beedham had been helping since the removal of Adams to Bolobo, and Pinnock also had come especially for the gatherings. Over two hundred visitors came from the sub-stations, and accommodation had to be found for them during the four days of the meetings. A Hospitality Committee was formed, and they had no difficulty in placing them all in various houses in the town. Food was provided by the Church, the missionaries giving the meat.

The first meeting was held on Saturday afternoon, and took the form of a "Welcome" to the Grahams and the new missionaries. A man and a woman member spoke words of welcome on behalf of the people, and Mr. and Mrs. Graham responded. On Sunday the ordinary routine of services was followed, and the crowd was an inspiring sight; moreover, the order was most commendable when one remembers that most of the visitors had not been in the habit of sitting at services in a chapel. I was privileged to preach at eleven o'clock the opening sermon, and took for my text, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." The afternoon was given over as usual to the women, when at least five hundred of them assembled, and Mrs. Graham, Mrs. Beedham and Mrs. Lewis took part. Later, Graham preached to men only on "The whole armour of God." We followed the custom among all Congo missionaries of spending the Sunday evening in one of our homes, taking part together in an informal English service. On these occasions a sermon by some well-known preacher is read—on no account do we allow a man to preach his own! We were nine that evening.

Monday, when the opening meeting took place, was really the great day of the feast. There was a rush for seats, but the larger part of the congregation squatted on the floor. Phillips had trained his choir well, and they sang special hymns and anthems composed for the occasion. Bowskill was busy with his four cameras, taking photographs at intervals. Again my colleagues insisted upon my taking the chair. We timed the speakers, allowing ten minutes to each of the natives and five to the white folk, and the bell cut them short without mercy. Three men who started with us in the building of the chapel

had died, and our first reference was to them ; two had been members of the church.

The first speaker was Mantu Parkinson, the first convert to be baptized on the Congo. He spoke of the early missionaries, and especially his connection with Comber. Others, men and women, both black and white, spoke of their experiences. Mata, who had been travelling with Comber, Hartland and Crudgington, told us wonderful tales of their pioneer journeys. He had been initiated into the mysteries of the " Witch doctor," and was, therefore, a very useful man on the road. One of his stories was to the effect that when he was with Bentley and Crudgington on their first journey to Stanley Pool a big chief would only allow the white men to pass through his territory on condition that they would swim across a stream which was infested with crocodiles. " The white men," said the speaker, " stripped themselves and boldly jumped into the water, and they had to push away the crocodiles with their shoulders to get through. When the chief saw it he was satisfied that they were ' good people,' else the crocodiles would have eaten them." Mata had plenty of imagination, and he made our flesh creep, but when I asked Bentley afterwards about the veracity of the speaker he could not recall the occasion. But the speech made a great impression !

The great speech was made by Lau, the senior woman deacon, who related the story of the visit of Lieutenant Grandy, when he cured her husband, Dom Pedro the king, of the smallpox. I suppose she was the favourite wife of the old king, and the only one who had any affection for him. She was named Regina (the queen). She nearly succumbed herself to the disease through her faithful devotion to him

during his illness, and carried the marks of it on her face for the rest of her life.

It was a great meeting, and I listened to addresses that day from the Congo Christians that burned into my very soul. Had I been told twenty years before that I would hear such weighty and wise words from the lips of the people I would have ridiculed the idea. Yet here were the facts, and the facts were miracles of grace.

There were other meetings, among them a full service of song, "The Pilgrim's Progress," rendered by Phillips and his choir. Bunyan's immortal dream had just then been translated into the Kongo tongue. The final meeting of the series was a missionary one, and was a farewell gathering to Pinnock and ourselves, who were leaving next morning to settle permanently at Kibokolo.

Naturally, much had been said about my part in the building of this House of God. In those days it was a big thing to attempt, especially with no skilled labour at one's command. I was greatly attached to San Salvador station and every stone and piece of timber in its buildings, prouder still of the boys who had put their heart into the work and had turned out such splendid workmen. After I left, my brethren set up a brass plate, engraved with my name, an act which I honestly appreciated.

The natives very significantly called the chapel Mr. Lewis's "tumbala" (tomb), standing as it does in proximity to the ruins of the old cathedral where kings and nobles have been buried for generations. Looking back through the intervening thirty years, I am inclined to think that name was prophetic and suggestive. It may be a fine "tomb" to commemorate the mistakes of the past, rather than a

living temple for the service of God. After all, a large building with Gothic arches to the windows and spires pointing upwards to heaven may be a fine thing for us white people, but it represents the white man's ideas and tastes. I wonder if we are wise in thrusting these ideas upon the African people, making Christianity savour of Europeanism and white man's "fashions"? Unconsciously, missionaries have been guilty of supplying white man's trimmings to a black man's church. To-day we are wiser in many things than we were fifty years ago, but we have yet to go a long way to attain what I consider the ideal simplicity of an African institution. Besides, large churches are doubtful blessings, and should be divided into smaller congregations which are generally more active, and certainly more easily managed. I have in mind the smaller buildings, although European in style, of the German missions in the Cameroons.

No, if I were permitted to start my mission life afresh I should discourage the erection of any large building on the European plan among African converts.

CHAPTER XVII

Pioneering in Zomboland

The early missionaries, as they looked to the east from San Salvador, saw in the distance a range of hills stretching from the south and terminating abruptly at a rocky point in the north-east known among the natives as Ntu-a-Mboma (the Head of the Python). This highland can be seen from great distances in clear weather, and it certainly has an appearance suggestive of the reptile whose name it bears. It is the butting end of the second plateau of West Central Africa, and roughly marks the boundary between the Congo country and Zombo.

The ascent to it is very steep, and only here and there can one find a way to the top. Tom Comber, in his passion for solving mysteries, went as far as the bottom of the hills in the early eighties, and discovered the Kizulu Falls, which he renamed the Arthington Falls. This is on the Mbrizi river. After running down through the rocks in a series of cataracts it takes a leap of 700 feet into a deep gorge, and then emerges into the valley below on its journey to the coast, and enters the sea at Ambrizette.

I have reason to remember those Falls, for on one of my visits in later years I spent a whole day trying to get into position to photograph them. I fixed my camera on a narrow ledge of rock on the brink of a precipice. Having taken the photographs, I handed the camera back to my boy, who was holding on. I had been standing on a piece of

rock just big enough for one foot to rest on it, and when I twisted round to get back, the rock slipped from under my foot, and I felt myself going. Fortunately, I was holding on to a branch of a tree, and I instinctively gripped my hardest at the twig, with which I steadied myself, and gradually climbed up. My wife was a few yards away, looking on with the boys, but they thought I was only playing, and had no idea that I had 700 feet of empty space beneath me. For many nights afterwards I used to wake up with a start thinking I was falling over a precipice. But I had my photograph !

The inhabitants of Zombo were known as a very strong and warlike people who were determined at all costs to keep the white man away. They had made a vow in the name of their most terrible deities that no man wearing trousers should be allowed to pass through their country ; and this meant that nobody belonging to the Europeans should be made welcome. No one can blame them, for the Zombos had been for generations the prey of the slave traders, who mostly came from San Salvador. These Kongos wore the European garb to make it appear that they came with the authority of the Portuguese and the King of Congo. Generally this was the case, and the San Salvador people were suspected and hated in consequence. The Zombos born on the healthier highlands had replenished the population of the royal city for generations, and some of our best men were from that district.

They were great traders, and large caravans of men came down through the country, laden with rubber and coffee, to trade for cloth, powder, and salt from the Europeans. They were well armed with native weapons, and greatly feared by the villagers through

whose country they passed. Their trade route did not touch San Salvador, and they avoided the white people who might have enslaved them. Even at the factories on the coast they employed the trade touters known as "Linguisters" to deal with the white men.

We often met them on our itineraries, and tried to engage them in conversation, but they would have nothing to do with us. We noticed their strong physique and the enormous loads they carried, and we longed to get into their country to win them for Christ.

Dr. Holman Bentley extended his journeys from Wathen in that direction, and in the nineties reached Makela. His account of the journey created great interest at home, as among ourselves. We also had been urging the Home Committee to allow us to visit the land and to establish a new station among these interesting people, but it was not until 1898 that I was asked to undertake a prospecting journey with a view to establishing a new mission station among the Zombos. At the time, as I have written in the previous chapter, I was busy with the building of our new chapel at San Salvador, but the station staff deemed this advance into the interior so important and pressing that we did not hesitate to partially suspend building operations for a month or two.

It was decided that my wife should accompany me on this journey, for in past days we had found that the presence of a white lady helped to allay the suspicions of the people and to assure them that we had come with a peaceful purpose.

When, therefore, we had laid the memorial stones at San Salvador we began to make preparations for the journey, so as to get the full benefit of the dry

season. I sent for Mata, who always acted as Capita for me in my travels, and told him what I wanted and explained the purpose of my journey. He was an experienced hand and knew nothing of fear, for he had travelled with Comber, Hartland and Crudgington on their first attempts to reach Stanley Pool. I was astonished to find him reluctant to make this journey with me ; indeed, he said he would not go, giving as his reason that he " did not want to die yet." I did not know then what I learnt afterwards, that the Kongos were afraid of going to Zombo lest the people should retaliate on them for their share in the slave raids of former years. Besides, to take a white man to this country would infuriate the people still further against them, so Mata put every obstacle he could think of in my way. For three weeks I waited for him, but at last my patience wore out, and I bluntly said that if he did not wish to come I would send elsewhere for carriers. Seeing that I was determined, he agreed to consult the men who usually travelled with me, and that evening brought the more important of them to me to talk matters over. He introduced the interview by saying that they had made up their minds to go to Zombo with me because they could not let me go with strangers. " But," said he, " none of us will ever come back alive. We know Zombo, and you do not." I accepted all the responsibility.

We had to take sufficient goods and food for about three months, and a tent, pots and pans, and the necessary adjuncts of tropical travelling, had to be carried. We could not do with less than forty men. These were engaged, and in a few days all was ready for the start. The evening before we left, they came to tie up their loads in matete, a

long basket constructed of the raffia palm fronds neatly plaited together and very strong. The first day we were going to stay at one of our sub-stations about ten miles away, and quite a number of the San Salvador Christians and friends accompanied us so far. The wives of the carriers came along too. They were all pessimists, and looked upon us as going to certain death.

Next morning we were up very early for our start. The women set up a big howling cry as their husbands led the way with their loads. It was the correct thing to do, and the tears streamed down their cheeks at the thought that they would never see their dear husbands again, but I had a deep suspicion that at least half of them would have rejoiced if they had seen the last of them! A few minutes later they retraced their steps to San Salvador while we proceeded on our second day's journey.

For two or three days we moved among friends, who tried to persuade me not to go to Zombo, as they were "such bad people there." I now quote from what I wrote at the time for *The Missionary Herald*:

We first of all made our way to the Makela towns, where there is a Portuguese Residente and a trader. There are two or three firms who are arranging for sites and are about to send their representatives there, so they evidently look upon it as a promising field for trade. As our business was to make friends with the natives we declined the offers of hospitality kindly tendered to us by the Residente and trader, and stayed in native huts as the guests of the people. We were well received at all these towns, and the native chiefs were very pressing in their representations, asking us to build in

their towns. Both at Mbongi (where the Residente lives) and at Mbanza Makela (the principal town of the group) they begged me to choose a plot of ground and build immediately. These Makela people come to San Salvador sometimes, and know me well by name and repute, and they wanted me to make a promise that I would come to stay in their town. I explained that I wanted to see all the country first, and that I could make them no promise just then. Still, we were very glad to receive such a hearty welcome, and we stayed there several days, including a Sunday.

The chief of Makela supplied me with a guide to take us to the next district, Mbuzu, with its thirty-six towns and a population of about 5,000. All along the route we passed many towns, including Ngombe, with its population of about 3,000. Both on the right and the left there were large towns which I could not visit nor form any idea of the number of people in them. We were now among people unaccustomed to white men, very superstitious, frightened and suspicious; but we were well received at Mbuzu, and they begged us to stay a day longer, which we did, and they came in good force to hear our message. We were making our way to the Nkisi River, which runs in a north-west direction to the Congo River, into which it empties itself between Wathen and Stanley Pool. We had been told that there was a very large population on the banks of this river, but on reaching Kibulungu we found that the towns were neither large nor numerous. The valley is exceedingly swampy, in the wet season the river overflows its banks, and crossing in canoes is a dangerous business. Native ferries are the only means of crossing; and crocodiles are plentiful.

Altogether, the river is not tempting, either as a place of abode or a field of labour. The towns are difficult to reach on account of the river and swamps. We had intended to cross the Nkisi into the Kidia district, but from the hills on this side we could see that the towns opposite were less numerous than here, and, therefore, we decided to turn back and waste no time on an unlikely district. Besides, the River Nkisi would be a great obstacle in the transport of goods to the Kidia side. We therefore gave up all idea of crossing, and after three days' stay made our way back to Zombo proper.

Two days' journey brought us to Kinzau, another populous district, where we stayed three days ; and three hours' march farther south is Kibokolo, which may be considered the heart of Zombo. This district is very thickly populated, containing one of the most important markets in the country. The principal town is the largest I have seen in Congo. I estimate that there are about 5,000 people in it (San Salvador has about 1,500—not more than 2,000). Within a one-hour radius there are at least a score of towns of some considerable size. I was not able to visit these towns, I wrote at the time, and cannot therefore form any estimate of the number of people within easy reach. This is by far the best centre for mission work. Heathenism is rampant, and never before have I seen such a display of fetishes and superstitious rites. Our appearance in the district caused much confusion, and the people were afraid lest we should bewitch them and cause them all to die. There were cries of, " The country is dead ; the country is dead " ; and I have no doubt that they firmly believed it.

However, in about an hour's time we succeeded in

finding the chief, and he gave us a native house to sleep in, and then some of the people came around us to shake hands. That evening the chief and some of his followers came together, and I talked to them about the Gospel, and explained our message. They could not understand anybody being so disinterested as to take all this trouble for their sake. Next day, being market day, the chiefs of the surrounding towns came and discussed with the Kibokolo people our presence in their country. There was a strong party in favour of fighting and killing us, carriers and all ; but others would not agree to this. They had heard that we had stayed at many towns on the way, but knew of nothing bad done by the white man or his carriers. At last they agreed to drive us away from their towns, but no bodily harm was to be inflicted upon us. We found this out afterwards ; at the time we knew nothing about the agitation against us.

I had taken advantage of the quietness of a market morning to send the carriers and lads down to the river to wash themselves and their clothes, and they were each given a piece of soap. They besported themselves in the running stream, and were still there at midday when the people, many of whom had been drinking freely of palm wine and did not know exactly what they were doing, began to return from market. They noticed some soap suds in the pool, where the carriers had been washing their clothes, and demanded to know what it was. They had never seen such a thing before, and as they could not get a satisfactory answer they raised the cry that the white man had sent his boys down to poison their beautiful water. One of the drunken natives shouted excitedly that he had been down to the coast and knew the white man's poison, as he considered the soap

to be. Another man created another bit of excitement by saying that he had seen one of the carriers hiding a fetish in the forest, while a third declared that one of the boys was ill with small-pox. All this was entirely false, the accusations being concocted by the chiefs purposely to create an uproar and force us away from the country.

In an extraordinarily short space of time the greater part of the town was around us, some with loaded guns and others with cutlasses, spears, bows and arrows, and sticks, while the witch-doctors and women brought out their fetishes and commenced dancing and gesticulating in the wildest manner. This was heathenism in its worst aspect, and the scene was indescribable. The excitement was growing in intensity, their attitude became more threatening, and they were demanding our immediate departure. I got all the carriers and boys together and told them to keep perfectly quiet. The owner of the house which we occupied was very friendly, and he with three or four others tried to keep back the crowd. We told them over and over that we would not go away that day, do what they would.

The chief sent us the usual complimentary present of two fowls and a calabash of native beer—said to be non-intoxicating—for the carriers. This was to dismiss us from the town "on friendly terms," and he considered his responsibility at an end. The "beer," as we suspected, had been previously "cursed" by the witch-doctor, and it was supposed to have the power of killing us all if we partook of it. I accepted the present, the carriers finished the drink in the presence of all, and the townfolk were greatly astonished to find that they did not fall down dead on the spot. I told the headmen, who brought the present, that

we did not mean to go away that day, but that in the morning we would pay our respects to the chief before leaving their town. The excitement among the people, however, did not cool down, for they kept on at a furious rate to the middle of the night.

We retired to bed early, and in spite of the beating of drums and the blowing of horns, we managed to get some sleep. Next morning we packed up our things, and the noise and excitement continued. They were evidently surprised at our showing no fight. I exchanged presents with Kapala, the chief, who was profuse in his apology for the bad behaviour of his people, saying he could not stop them. He was at the bottom of it all himself, but was evidently getting afraid of possible retribution. We parted "friends" as symbolised by the mutual acceptance of presents, and I called my carriers to lift their loads. Never before did I see such eagerness on the part of carriers to be on the march—they had been scared nearly out of their wits. I could with difficulty keep up with them. A crowd followed us about a mile or two outside the town, with their horns and drums driving us away ; but as they turned back, for some reason or other they changed their cursing into blessing, and were calling upon the "spirits" to protect the white man and his people "if they have done no harm in the town." So we left Kibokolo, but we had carried out our plans in full, except that we had hoped to stay in the district a few days longer. We considered that on the whole it was the wiser policy to retire for the time being, and let the people have time to find out that our presence did them no injury. Still, even at Kibokolo there were two or three who gave up their houses to ourselves and carriers, and who stood by us all through the uproar !

On our return journey a most unusual thing occurred, which I had great hopes would cause them to change their attitude towards us. When nearing San Salvador we found that the whole country was much disturbed on account of a mistaken policy of the Portuguese Resident ; the people of Lembelwa and Tanda districts had closed the road to the coast against all carriers. We met some five hundred Zombos, a large number of whom were from the Kibokolo district, returning to their country with their rubber, having failed to pass. They were much afraid of us, lest we should retaliate on them for the treatment we had received in their country ; but I succeeded in getting them together and persuaded them to come along with me, promising to pass them to the coast without molestation. It took some time to convince them of my good intentions, but ultimately they agreed to trust themselves to me. On the next day we came to the disturbed district, and I took my position in front of the whole company. At the entrance into each town we were met by armed men, who were stopping passers-by. I was well known to them all, and they made no resistance when I asked them to stand on one side until the Zombos had passed. That night all of us slept at Mwingu, one of the disturbed towns, and I gathered the chiefs together, and talked to them very strongly of the wickedness and foolishness of their behaviour, the headmen of the Zombos listening all the while.

The outcome of our palaver was that they promised to reopen the road and allow carriers to pass unmolested ; and the effect upon the Zombos was very remarkable : they had looked upon the white man as their enemy, and now they saw he was their best friend

after all. The native Christians who accompanied us as carriers were delighted at the turn of affairs, and Mata, the headman of the caravan, said to me that night : " O master, I have seen a wonderful work of God to-day ; the Kibokolo people drove you away, but when these carriers return home your name will be lifted up to the sky all through Zombo. Truly God has wrought this marvellous work."

When we reached San Salvador we found that wild reports had reached our friends via Makela to the effect that we had all been killed in the Kibokolo district, and the Portuguese Resident was actually preparing a party of soldiers to go in search of us.

How lovely was the feeling of a boarded floor under one's feet again in our old home, and how deliciously sweet was the food served on a proper table, and real bread once more !

CHAPTER XVIII

Moving the Tent

Mata's prophecy was fulfilled sooner than we expected. The Zombos who had accompanied us on the return journey and had witnessed the palaver at Mwingu wasted nothing of the romance connected with that incident when they told the Kibokolo chiefs what I had done. They concluded that it would be a fine thing to have that white man to live in their country and settle their war palavers. For three months they met at palavers to discuss means to get me back, but as they had driven me away from their country they considered that I would be too offended to receive them direct. So, in the usual African way, they thought of Mbumba, the chief of Mbanza Mputu, and decided to enlist his sympathy and help and to send their messengers through him. As a preliminary, the Kibokolo chiefs sent several boys for our school ; but when they presented themselves to me at San Salvador I suggested that they should return to their country, and promised that I would follow as soon as the rains stopped, to discuss the whole matter. This message cheered the hearts of the people.

Now I go back to the month of June, to take up the story of our second visit to Kibokolo. There was no difficulty in obtaining carriers this time, and Mata was again in charge of the men. Nosso of Mbanza Mputu had made up his mind to accompany us. He was getting old and feeble, and had to be carried all the way in a hammock. Even if he had been

younger, the dignity of his position would have required that he should be carried in style, for he was looked upon as the head of the Nkusu clan. To meet his wishes we took a different route, so that we could visit that country first. We ascended the plateau at Kizulu, and followed the course of the Mbrizi for the best part of the day. All this district paid direct allegiance to Nosso, and he was duly fêted all along. The dancing and drumming was a trial which we had to put up with. The people had not seen him since his conversion, and great was their astonishment at the change in his demeanour. The lion had become a lamb ! The chief who had formerly thought nothing of shooting a man for a slight act of disrespect was now meek and mild. I am sorry and ashamed to say that his carriers took advantage of this change and thought more of their own comfort than of his.

The road was exceedingly rough, and some of the hills very steep. We had to scramble on hands and feet in some places, while it took the combined efforts of three men to drag and push poor old Nosso through the tall grass. To make matters worse, a very plausible man who had volunteered his service as guide took us miles out of the way. Our carriers named him " Mr. Talkative," after Bunyan's character in " The Pilgrim's Progress."

It was more difficult still to descend into the Lufunde valley, which we had to cross to get to Nkusu on the opposite side. Our troubles increased considerably when we got into a swamp where there was a well-known eel fishery. But we were not eels, and all of us made many slips and disappeared over our heads in the muddy water. There were plenty of papyrus to cling to, so we were all able to draw

ourselves in eel-like fashion to a place of safety. At one point, just as I was reappearing after a slip into the mud, I saw Mata, who was supposed to help me, standing on a tuft of papyrus laughing as if it were great fun. He wanted to know from me if this was Christian's "Slough of Despond"! He had only just emerged from a dip himself, and his face was all slime, and he named himself "Pliable," which was far from being true. After about two and a half hours we got out of the mire "on that side which was farther from our own house," and looked in vain for the man who carried our dry clothes.

In the meantime my wife, under the care of Kivitidi and Vita with the hammock carriers, had gone before, and without waiting for a change of clothing had reached one of the villages. Mrs. Lewis's appearance in this sudden manner drove all the women and children out of sight. When, however, our men shouted that Nosso was coming they returned and became friendly. Nosso had been dragged through the swamp in his hammock, but I did not see him. I always made a point of following all the carriers, so as to keep the stragglers up to the mark and see that our boxes were ahead. Hence my coming in long after the others.

We slept that night in the town at the bottom of the hill, and next day climbed up to the chief town of Nkusu. The chief of the district, who was a "nephew" of Nosso, gave us a royal welcome. It was through him that the Kibokolo chiefs had approached Nosso the year before, and me through Nosso. We stayed there from the Friday till the following Wednesday. Early on Sunday morning a man with Nosso's trumpet was sent round the town telling them not to go to their farms, but to come to

hear God's palaver from the white man. Soon after breakfast the chief, whose name was Ndosimao, came to greet me, with a train of inferior chiefs behind. They saluted in Congo fashion, kneeling every few yards and clapping their hands. They were amused when I accepted their homage in the customary manner of a big chief.

We all gathered together in the shade of the palaver square. I spoke to the people, explaining the Gospel message, and Mata followed, while Nosso finished up with his personal testimony to the power of the teaching. Before we were done with the town folk, others arrived from more distant villages, so we began over again with a fresh audience.

In the afternoon I had another opportunity to talk to strangers who had come in. Mata had been telling them how the Gospel was bringing peace and happiness into the land, and that people who believe and accept the teaching do not keep anger in their hearts towards one another. At this point an interesting incident occured. Ndosimao was not at the meeting, but he heard all that was said from his own house. It appeared that there were two chiefs listening to Mata, men with whom Ndosimao was at enmity. Had they been friends it would have been the natural thing for them to visit the chief and pay him homage. They did not. When Mata stopped speaking, Ndosimao appeared from his place and walked through the crowd to where we were sitting. He saluted on his knees and then said, " We have been asking for the white man ; this teaching which he gives us is good : so let us receive him and his teaching and be friends." He then did obeisance to the two chiefs, and they, in utter astonishment, returned the salute and declared themselves his friends again. This was a

little practical application of our teaching which was highly gratifying. Later on we established our first sub-station from Kibokolo here.

The following Monday morning the Kibokolo chiefs arrived with a crowd of their people. It was interesting to watch them. It became clear that much jealousy existed among them as to which district was to have the white man. Indeed, so hot had become the discussion that I declared that rather than cause disagreements and fighting I would go through their country to Makela and build where the Resident was. They insisted that if I passed through to the Makela road they would fire at the carriers. I then asked Ndosimao to give me a guide to take me another way, without going to Kibokolo at all. While this haggling was going on Nosso arrived to say that the Kibokolo chiefs had agreed to let me choose my own site for a Mission Station. It was two days' journey from Mbanza Nkusu to the first town. We went first to Kimalomba, whose chief was Nkila Nkosi (the Lion's Tail). He was an intelligent and much-travelled man, and like most other chiefs very fond of drink, and it was he who gave most trouble at Nkusu. He did not like our going to the other side. We held a big palaver here and finally came to the point.

"Where are you going to build?" they asked.

I replied, "Do you see those palm trees on the hill yonder?"

"Yes."

"There is another hill in the distance behind it, and palm trees on that too," said I.

"How do you know?"

"Oh, I was here twelve moons ago and saw it then."

"Did you choose the place for your house then when we drove you away?"

"Yes," I said, "I did."

There was a laugh at that; they evidently thought it was rather a smart thing to do under the circumstances.

"When will you build?" they said.

"At once," I replied, "if anybody will sell me a house I will put it up to-day."

Everybody was ready to sell his house! It was a new bit of business, and Zombos are, above everything else, business men! I went round one of the villages near the site and selected a hut that would suit my purpose, settled the price with the owner, paid him twelve yards of calico for it, and he was satisfied. The men immediately began to dig around this hut to carry it across to the new place, and the women volunteered to go and clear the ground of the grass, to prepare for the re-erection of the hut. When we arrived all was ready, and in less than half an hour the men had re-erected this native hut, which became the first Mission House at Kibokolo.

The people returned to their villages to dance and drink their beer and palm wine to celebrate our settlement among them. When we got quiet on the hill we arranged our much-worn tin travelling trunks on the inside of the one-roomed hut which had been put up, and in the centre we placed a larger tin trunk, very much bulged by the journey, to serve as a table. There were eight people, including Nosso, who were members of the church at San Salvador, and we gathered for a prayer meeting. It was an experience never to be forgotten to hear these men thanking God for protecting our lives on these journeys to Zombo, and especially for the establishing of a new station at Kibokolo.

After the prayer meeting we held a Communion Service, the most sacred I have ever attended. There we were, sitting on those trunks around the room, with that battered trunk as a Communion Table, a glass of cold water from the stream and a dry, very dry, ship's biscuit, for the elements ; and in this simple manner we commemorated the dying love of our Lord, and consecrated the spot for the service of our Master.

Again after the Communion Service I told them how we hoped to call our new station the Comber Memorial Station, in memory of that devoted family. There are six bearing that honoured name, three brothers and a sister, with two wives, lying buried in the dust of Africa to-day. The father, Thomas Comber, Senior, was at that time living in California, and I knew him well. It was the joy of his heart that all his children had not only become missionaries, but that they had also laid down their lives for Africa. I wrote to him about our first pioneering journey, and again of the second, saying that we were naming the station after his children and in loving memory of their work. He was overcome with the joy of it all, and he finished his last letter ever written to me with the words : "And now, my dear Lewis, I feel like Simeon of old, and am ready to say, 'Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace.'"

Six months later he passed over to join his children in the service above, and, as I firmly believe, they rejoice with us in the wonderful success of the past fifty years of labour in Congoland.

CHAPTER XIX

Travels from Kibokolo

Kibokolo is the name of a district comprising thirteen towns or villages, each with its local chief, with one of them as the nominal head. The spot chosen for building the Mission Station is situated on the breast of a hill, overlooking the winding stream where the natives saw the soap-suds on our first journey. The place stands on the highlands, and on the trade route from Makela, running south to Ndamba and other districts until it meets the railway from Loanda at Malanzi. It is a well-drained, sandy country, with hardly any swamps. The Mission House stands at 3,230 feet above sea-level, and is much the highest station the B.M.S. has in Congo. On the highlands generally the population is much larger and healthier than in the valleys. It was mainly for these reasons that the position was selected.

On our second visit, described in the last chapter, Pinnock brought some of his boys with him from Tumba to meet me, and it was a great joy to have as colleague an old Cameroons comrade. After a few days, my wife and I returned to San Salvador, for the chapel there had not been completed. Pinnock remained to put up a grass house to meet our requirements, and after a month he and a number of Zombos followed us to San Salvador in time for the opening services. Then we returned to Kibokolo to settle down finally.

The roving spirit so essential in pioneering work

had got hold of me by this time, and there was a thrill of excitement at starting a new work. It was the only compensation for leaving the people whom both my wife and I dearly loved.

Grass fires, lighted at the end of the dry season, were in full swing. The excitement is general on these occasions, for all the men go out hunting deer and antelopes, both very plentiful in Zombo. Venison is a most acceptable change of diet from the eternal skinny fowl, and there is no difficulty in buying it from the natives at a reasonable price during the hunting season. All this is to the good, but this season is also the time to pay back old grudges. It is the easiest thing possible to shoot an enemy by a well calculated mistake, and such accidents are numerous. For this reason we never allow any of our boys to join in a native hunt : the men shoot in every direction as the animals flee before the roaring grass fires.

On the first evening after our arrival at the station, a townsman was carried home in a hammock from one of these hunts, badly wounded. There was the usual outcry and the howling of the women, and I thought at first that someone was dead. When we were told that a man had been shot, Pinnock and I took a supply of cotton wool, bandages and disinfectant and went down to the village to see what we could do. The wounded man had been laid in the middle of the courtyard, and was surrounded by a yelling crowd. The medicine men were dancing and rushing about for the proper leaves to cure him. The poor man uttered not a word or a cry. The jerking of the improvised hammock over the rough, hilly roads had caused his smaller intestines to pass out through a slit in the abdomen where he had been

shot, and these were now on the ground mixed with sand. It was a horrible sight. We gathered the intestines into a bowl, washed them carefully with disinfectant, and gradually pressed them back through the slit. Evidently the "bullet" (they use pieces of iron-stone as shot) had only just enough force to pierce the membranes without damaging the inside. Our efforts took a long time, and when at last I closed the wound with three stitches, the crowd could not believe their eyes, so astonished were they, and they clapped their hands in acknowledgment. We then carried the man into his hut, and bandaged him carefully, giving strict orders that the patient should not be moved until I came to see him next day.

Next morning, as we were sitting at breakfast in our little grass house, we saw a crowd of people coming along in a procession, the leader carrying in his hands the bandages we had used the night before. They stood at the door, saying nothing. I concluded that our patient had died, and that they were bringing back the bandages to me and were most likely going to accuse me of killing the man. I rushed out to them, and demanded to know why they had undone the bandages and what they had done to the man. Judge of my horror when the man carrying the bandages exposed to my view the three stitches on his own body and declared himself to be the wounded man, now "perfectly well!" I am not sure what I said in reply. I re-bandaged him, but the chief protested, and pointed to the stitches, saying, "You have mended him so well that his stomach is now stronger than it ever was before"! The poor man belonged to another district, and the man responsible for the accident was also responsible for

doctoring him, so he had been carried to Kibokolo. They were, therefore, most anxious that he should return home to his people "properly cured."

This incident did the Mission an immense amount of good, and the "wonderful miracle" was proclaimed all through Zombo. Afterwards this man was always spoken of to me as "the man you mended." My reputation as a doctor was assured, and my fame, like Jonah's gourd, had grown in a night.

A few months after this occurrence George Hooper, a student from Bristol College, joined our staff. I was delighted to find in him a colleague of a kindred spirit and with a practical turn of mind. He was also strong of body, and just the man we wanted for the rough life of a new station. With Hooper and Pinnock, and, later on, each with his wife, we settled down to the hard work of building our permanent dwellings. There was plenty of hard wood in the district, Pinnock soon trained half a dozen Zombo men as sawyers, and sufficient material for the three bungalows was piled up for seasoning.

My own ambition was to explore the country as far as possible and to make a map of the various districts on the great plateau with a view to pushing forward our work to the south and south-east. From information received, I was convinced that the highlands were much healthier than the cataract regions or the valleys of the Congo River and the Kwangu, the population larger and the people more robust and active. Mrs. Lewis and I travelled very extensively during the earlier years in Kibokolo, and visited Nkusu, Ndamba and Sonso to the south, and reached as far as Mabaya to the south-west to visit our friends, the Camerons, who had recently established a Mission there. We paid more attention to the east at first,

but found a lower type of native once we crossed the Nzadi a Nkisi.

For many years I had been qualifying myself as far as I could for this special kind of work. While at the Cameroons I took the advice of the veteran Mr. Anderson, of Old Calabar, when he warned Silvey and myself to take up some hobby outside our mission work. I had found some books on Astronomy among those left by Alfred Saker at Duala, and my imagination was captured by the wonders of the sky. I got some new books on the subject, and especially the " Story of the Heavens," by Robert Ball, whose enthusiasm I caught. After that, it was natural that I should procure some instruments for astronomical observations, and the making of maps. When I settled at San Salvador I was the proud possessor of a telescope which was strong enough to follow the phases of Jupiter's moons and divide the rings of Saturn, and this has been my companion ever since.

I corresponded with George Grenfell before meeting him personally, and he put me in the way of observing and fixing astronomically the position in longitude and latitude. The first time I met Grenfell was when he returned from the Lunda Commission, in which he represented the Congo State in settling the eastern boundary with Portugal. He visited San Salvador at the time with my friend Lawson Forfeitt, and brought with him his theodolite and other instruments to decide once and for all the true position of the Royal city. It was found that previous observations of travellers, including his own, were considerably in error. This was delightful news to me, for with my sextant and other simple instruments I had been practising and taking all sorts of observations, and was never able to

get near the correct position of San Salvador. I had almost given up hope of obtaining any degree of correctness in my work, but kept my failures to myself. Now I cheerfully brought out the map I was preparing of the journeys I had already made, and received the commendation of my tutor.

By the time I made the first journey to Zombo I had gained more confidence, and ever after I always travelled with instruments and made independent observations each time I traversed a district. When I had settled down in Kibokolo I seized every opportunity of perfecting the map. I also established a Meteorological Station, supplying the Portuguese Government with the daily variations of temperature, barometric pressure, rainfall and other items, which were published regularly in the Official Bulletin at Loanda. Native lads are easily trained to take down these observations, and my colleagues were good enough to help in this "fad" of mine.

When, early in 1901, Mrs. Lewis and I went home on furlough, I had a good part of the country mapped out, and it happened that Grenfell was also home at the time. I found that he had been talking to the officers of the Royal Geographical Society about my little map, and I was astonished one morning to receive a note from Mr. E. B. Ravenstein, the Cartographer of the Society at the time and an authority on all things African, asking me if I would come down to see him, and mentioning that Grenfell had told him I had a good map of Zombo. I responded at once, left my map in his hands, and thought nothing more of it.

It was the year of the Glasgow Exhibition, and the British Association met at Glasgow that year. About three weeks before the meeting of the British Association

in that city, I had a note from the Secretary of the Geographical Section, asking me to read a paper based on the map which Mr. Ravenstein had in his possession. I declined the honour by return of post, and then met Grenfell, with the result that the same evening another letter was written to accept. Thus I made my debut as a geographer at the British Association. After that I was asked to lecture before the Royal Geographical Society in London, and did so in February, 1902, with Sir George Mackenzie in the chair. In the same year I gave another lecture for the Scottish Society in Edinburgh and Glasgow. At Edinburgh I was the guest of Dr. Stewart, of Lovedale, and spent three delightful days in his company. He also presided at the Geographical meeting. When I had served another term of service in Africa I was again honoured by a request to address the Royal Geographical Society in London. This lecture was given in February, 1908, Sir Taubman Goldie presiding.

The value of this to the Missionary Society was in the two maps published in the *Geographical Journal*. We were able to obtain a good supply from the printers at very little cost, and they were a great help to my colleagues in itineration work and visiting sub-stations.

It is some satisfaction to one's mind to know that many missionaries have been able to help considerably in geographical and ethnographical researches in Africa, while some of them have held a conspicuous position among those great men renowned in history for their discoveries and labours. Our George Grenfell received the highest honour that the Geographical world could offer him, as he was Gold Medallist of the premier geographical society of the world.

Returning to Congo after furlough, we had our old friends Mr. and Mrs. Lawson Forfeitt as fellow travellers. It was the first voyage we had made together, but during all the years in Africa we were in close touch with each other, he being stationed at Matadi and I at San Salvador and Zombo. Lawson Forfeitt was a wonderful man, especially suited for his post of Legal Representative of the Mission. His tact and his tenacity had always been my envy, and during his life he served the Society faithfully and well. But what appealed to me was his zeal and labour in connection with the English Mission for Coast people who had migrated to Matadi from all parts of Africa. He was a true father to these people, and Mrs. Forfeitt did a great work among the women and children. She had a school specially for them, and I love to recall the dark-skinned boys and girls as they ran up and down that Mission hill.

I remember with thankfulness the journey Mr. and Mrs. Forfeitt and my wife and I made to Stanley Pool and back, via Wathen, in the days when the railway only reached to Tumba. It was that journey which drew us so closely together, and in after years we liked to talk of our experiences then. But he was a frail man at the best, and lived by the force of his will and the care of his wife. She knew exactly what he needed and what he ought to do, and he did as she said. It was only so that he lived at all. She could manage the station at a push, and many times loaded the caravans of the wild people of Kibokolo when her husband was ill and nobody else was near. She has much to her credit.

At Las Palmas I bought two mules to take with me to Zombo, and rode one from Matadi to Kibokolo, passing through San Salvador on the way.

Mrs. Lewis rode part of the way, but had the hammock to rest in when tired of the saddle. It was an experiment : hitherto we had not been able to keep animals for any length of time, and we thought that perhaps they would thrive better in the highlands. But they both died within six months, for the deadly tsetse fly is as bad in the highlands as elsewhere. When this pest can be conquered we shall be able to keep cattle and horses, but not before. But it is now of little importance whether we can keep transport animals or not, for the motor-car cares nothing about the tsetse or mosquito. We may even hope that the smell of petrol will destroy all the pests.

CHAPTER XX

Difficulties and Setbacks

My wife and I received a boisterous reception on our return to Kibokolo, not only from our colleagues but from the chiefs and their people. However, it was a disappointment that the gospel message had made no appreciative advance among the people. They had often promised to send children to the school, and broke every promise unblushingly. And still they promised !

Looking back upon the state of things from this long distance, it is nothing to wonder at. Zombo was the stronghold of the witch-doctor, and Kibokolo the inner citadel. All the cults had their votaries here, and if their power broke in Kibokolo there would be no hope anywhere else. The great secret society called " Ndembo " held sway over all the district and up to our very door, and the nights were made hideous by the yelling and noises they made. It was the strongest freemason institution in Africa, without any redeeming feature belonging to it. The slightest disobedience or betrayal of secrets were punishable by instant death. Then there were the various " ngangas " (priests), the medicine men, fetish priests and witch doctors always on the alert defending their craft, and feeling that they were fighting their last battle for supremacy in the land. They were a desperate gang, and the successful obstruction if not the total destruction of the white man's teaching was their only hope. They watched

us carefully, and turned every incident against us. They knew that at bottom many of the people wanted us and our teaching. Fear was their chief weapon, and they exploited the credulity and superstition of the country to the full. Any person found visiting our house or coming to a service was likely to be charged with witchcraft and found guilty by the witch-doctors. So they kept away.

It happened that some came to our services and died soon after. Our enemies held that to be a final proof that the white man had taken the soul and shipped it to England. Our own saying that we had come to "save their souls" was clear evidence of that. One day, preceding a heavy tornado, a peculiar rumbling of thunder in the distance was noticed. We all heard it, for it was truly uncanny. It started on the horizon in the direction of Matadi, and slowly moved with increased power until it ended with a sudden clap over the Mission Station. When the force of the storm had spent itself, judge our surprise to see a crowd of armed natives, led by some of the chiefs, rush up and fill the veranda, demanding to know what that noise was. They said it was "Mfumu Lewis's train above the clouds, coming to fetch the spirits that had been collected in our secret stores." This kind of visit became the fashion. If there were a stoppage of rain in the wet season they would threaten us with guns. When, as it happened once after they had made a demonstration, rain fell heavily that same night, they said, "You see, he can send the rain all right when he wants to do so."

This state of things could not last for ever, for we found some who would listen to our teaching. Among these was the old chief Kapela, who regularly came, but never came inside our house. It was given

out more than once that he was selling the spirits of his people to the white man. Still he persisted in his friendship, and the people got tired of objecting to his visits. It was he who first gave us boys for our boarding school. We had a long palaver about getting school boys from the different townships, and fifteen chiefs assembled to discuss the matter. All except one agreed to send some children to be taught, and, of course, to live on the station with us. We had been deceived so often that we were not very sanguine about results, and when the appointed day arrived were not surprised that only Kapela and another made their appearance. Our old friend brought three little boys and two grown-up men, but as the latter had families in the town we sent them back and arranged for them to attend school daily, which worked out all right for a few months. The three lads were delighted, and when their relatives turned their backs they danced for joy ; they were proud of the clean European cloth we gave them to wear. This was the beginning, and slowly the fear of the white man passed away, and others came to learn " book."

Then one day Kapela, whose town was on the opposite side across the stream, where we were welcomed on our first journey, was seized with severe illness. He developed pneumonia, and there was great commotion in the district. Of course, the native medicine men were there, pouring cold water on him to quench the fever, and he went from bad to worse. The people were glad for me to give him medicine, and I never worked harder to save a patient than I did then. But whenever I turned my back the native " cold water cure " was applied, and I had to leave somebody on guard all the time. His

age was against him, and in spite of all our efforts to save him he died after a short illness.

According to native custom, the succession passed on to his nephew, a dissolute young fellow who would bring nothing but trouble. He was naturally much in evidence during his uncle's illness, and insisted that one of the wives had bewitched him. He was drinking heavily all the time, and protested that if his uncle died he would shoot the lot. I knew this was no vain threat if he had his way, and we doubled our vigilance. Just before the old man died I had gone back to the Mission for my midday meal, and as I was crossing the stream on my return I heard the report of a gun, followed immediately by another. I knew that the chief was dead. I ran up to the house, and found the people scattering in all directions. Nsingi (the nephew) on seeing that his uncle was dead, rushed for his gun, and fired promiscuously into the hut where the women were gathered, with the intention of killing some of them. When I arrived he had reloaded his two guns, and threatened to kill anybody who came near him. I was close to the women's house, and he was going to fire into it again. I made a dash up to him and brought my walking-stick down sharply on his arm, and the weapon fell to the ground. Then followed a struggle, and I held him down until help came. We carried away the guns and kept him prisoner in his own hut, while I went to see what damage had been done. Fortunately nobody was killed, but a bullet had passed through the hip of one of the women, and a young girl was badly wounded in the leg. We carried these two to the Mission, and Mrs. Lewis attended to them.

In a few days the representatives of the surrounding

district came to bind the body, and in the course of a week the remains of the dead man had grown considerably in bulk ; thousands of yards of cloth of every description had been wound around him, and transformed his small figure into a huge mummy. Being an important chief he could not be buried in a grave, and the corpse was suspended from a beam fixed on two posts in a specially built grass hut close to where he had lived. The burial proper would take place after the death of his successor.

One day was given to discuss the succession. I had, of course, protested against the appointment of the drunken nephew who had shot at the women, and the people were only too glad to follow my advice. Ultimately they chose Kapela's right-hand man, Donzwau, to be chief in his stead, and the town soon quieted down to its normal life again.

The new chief was friendly to the missionaries, and felt it incumbent on him to attend our Sunday services, but he was not a strong man. Also the old enmity between Kibokolo and Kimalomba revived, and the young men were getting somewhat out of hand. Nkila Nkosi had been making friends with the Portuguese at Makela, and his town in Kimalomba became the centre for the soldiers who came to the district to recruit carriers. Nkila Nkosi (Lion's tail) had waggled his tail so successfully that the demands of the Government fell heavily on the Kibokolo section, and thus he and his people saved themselves at the other's expense. I did my utmost to quiet down our folk, for I knew it would lead to trouble. Both Hooper and I for months had an anxious time, and at last, in October, 1902, the long-expected crash came. I give here an extract written in a circular letter to friends at home by my wife,

as this will show better than anything I can write from memory the exact truth about the incident.

Under date of 8th October, Mrs. Lewis wrote :

"A sad trouble has befallen us. As I write I look from the window upon the still smoking ruins of what but two days ago was the flourishing and most populous township of Zombo. But I will begin at the beginning and try to tell you what has happened.

"This is Wednesday. On Sunday morning, as we were just about to sit down to breakfast, two soldiers came asking to buy something. We told them to wait till the next day, and inquired then what they were here for. They said they had come from the Resident at Makela to demand carriers which were owing to him from Nzamba (the town just opposite, across the stream). We thought the people would be a little frightened, so did not expect a good meeting. Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hooper went off, each to separate towns, and I had the service here. On their return we all felt a little encouraged, for I had had over twenty townsfolk here, and they both had had fair numbers to listen.

"In passing through Nzamba, Mr. Lewis had found about fifteen soldiers there ; he had also seen some of our folks and told them to keep quiet and give the men that were owing. Just before dinner we heard the sound of rifle firing, and as we sat at table the boys told us three men had been shot by the soldiers. Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hooper went over to see if it were true, and found one man, the coming chief, dead, and two of the headmen badly shot : both of these died that evening. The soldiers had gone to the town where they were staying, and the people were vowing vengeance on Nkila Nkosi, the chief of that town.

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"There is an old feud between these two towns, and lately Nkila Nkosi has attached himself to the Portuguese Resident and traders at Makela, and has been doing his best to get our people into trouble. Now, through their own foolishness, he has succeeded too well.

"It seems that the soldiers tied up one of the headmen, and two others rushed to untie him, whereupon the soldiers fired and shot all three. Then followed a fight between the townsfolk and the soldiers, with the result that the Corporal in charge was badly wounded. He is here now, and we are afraid he will not recover.

"Mr. Lewis tried all he could to persuade the Nzamba people not to follow the soldiers, but they would not listen, and when they had finished attending to the sick men the fighting men were all on their way to the fight.

"In the meantime the people were rushing here, bringing all their poor belongings to the station, as it was too late to go far. Our yard was soon full of women and children, goats, pigs, two cats, fowls, baskets of manioc and other food, and bunches of plantain which had been hastily cut down; while under our house were packed matetes containing cloth, beads, gunpowder, etc. They were far too frightened to go back to their houses that night, so we packed them in with the children as well as we could, only glad to be able to prove to them that we were sorry for their trouble and wanted to help them. The men came begging Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hooper to go and fight on their side, and because they refused they cannot understand how we can be their friends.

"Night at last came, but very little sleep had

anyone, as you may imagine, and by dawn the next morning all the women and children, or nearly all, had left the town to go to their various families in other and more distant towns. The Nzamba men buried their dead the first thing without any noise, and did not intend to fight again that day ; but the other side came down the hill calling out to them, so they went, and returned in the evening very proud of themselves, saying they had conquered. But their triumph was very short-lived.

" Yesterday morning about eleven o'clock we saw from our window the Portuguese flag on the top of the hill, and very soon recognised the Resident just behind, accompanied by four soldiers and men carrying his hammock.

" He came straight to the station, but would not take any refreshment. He said he merely wanted to hear what we knew of the palaver, and to ask us to see to the soldier who had been wounded, and to obtain some medicine for his wife. The Resident left us, saying that he was going to see the chiefs of the towns, but we could see from our windows that the towns were quite empty, and he simply passed through and returned whence he came. Directly after dinner, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hooper rode off to see the sick soldier, and met him being brought here in a hammock. The Resident had told us that he had a thousand men from Makela with him, and they saw the valley full of armed men. They had come from all the towns round, some to pay off old scores, others to be on the winning side, having joined Nkila to save themselves. We gathered the children and workmen into our house, and there stood and watched as the force poured down the hill in hundreds and set fire to all the houses in Nzamba. It was hard

for our three boys, who came from there, to see their town in flames and to know that their enemies had the best of it. 'They could not have done it except with the white man's soldiers,' they said.

"At last the men crossed the brook which separates the two towns, and began burning this one. The old man who is our nearest neighbour and the headman of this part stayed on the station, for his wife had gone with the other women. He has been a friend to us from the beginning, and it was very pathetic to see the poor old man watching with eager eyes as they came nearer and nearer to his house. They went into all the huts and took anything that was left, but I am glad to say it was not much. When they came near the station they stopped burning, and just then a tremendous storm came on, the worst this season.

"The two little towns which I generally visit on a Sunday afternoon were destroyed, and one on the other side nearest to us. Whether it was the storm that stopped them going further we do not know, but they did not return to burn any more, though some came down the next morning to finish looting. We sent up to ask for some help with the sick man, and two soldiers came to stay with their wounded comrade. Soon after that the white sergeant arrived, with a message asking Mr. Lewis to call the chiefs of Kibokolo together. We were very glad to be able to say with truth that we did not know where they were, for it was only to get them into a trap."

Continuing the story on the 10th of October, Mrs. Lewis wrote: "Yesterday morning the poor soldier died; his wounds had been left too long for any but skilled help to avail. They came and carried him away for burial, and that is the last we have seen of them.

We hear that the Resident has gone back to meet the delimitation party at Makela, but the soldiers are left at Kimalomba (Nkila's town), and they are vowing vengeance against these people, so we are afraid we have not seen the end yet.

"There are fifteen houses left in this town ; the next nearest is ten minutes away, and there are plenty of people within an hour. But it is a terrible upset, and at present we hardly know what to do or say. One little consolation we have, that the people evidently understand that we are their friends.

"Yesterday one of the wives of Mwana Mputu came to the station saying she did not know where her husband was, so she and her child are staying here. In the afternoon a little boy came with a bad foot ; he and his mother were in hiding, and as his foot was bad he came here. He does not want to go away again, but that is an after-consideration ; he may not be allowed to stay.

"We hear shots in the direction of the town he has come from, but we do not know yet what they mean. We are in no danger personally, and can only trust that God Who led us here and has been so evidently with us in all times will not fail us now. We know He will not, neither will He let His work suffer ; but it is a long set back, we are afraid."

So at the end of 1902 and for most of the following year Kibokolo was under a dark cloud.

CHAPTER XXI

A Critical Period

Pinnock was already on furlough and gone to Jamaica. Hooper's first term of service was up, and his health began to fail, so in the early part of 1903 he left us for England. Mr. and Mrs. Bowskill were returning from their furlough to San Salvador, and it was agreed that they should come along to keep us company at Kibokolo during Hooper's absence.

When our colleague arrived at Matadi with carriers to bring the Bowskills up country, it was discovered that their departure from England had been delayed, so my wife and I were alone until September. Our loneliness was, however, broken by a surprise visit from our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Cameron, who came from Wathen, and they stayed with us for about three weeks. This visit was especially agreeable to my wife as she and Mrs. Cameron were fellow members at Camden Road, and had been at school together; and the friendship had been maintained through the years.

As no itineration had been possible since the destruction of the town, Cameron and I made a holiday by going out to the district for eight days. Incidentally, we came across a number of our people, who had scattered all over the country. Before our friends left we were astonished to see Holman Bentley on the scene. He had been itinerating in his district, had heard that we were left alone at Kibokolo, and had determined to pay us a visit. Our visitors were not

at all well, and required some nursing, but this had the advantage of prolonging their stay, and the intercourse was very delightful. In September the Bowskills arrived, and received a warm welcome from ourselves and the few natives with us.

During these nine months we had much to do building our houses on the station, and never relaxed in our endeavour to get into touch with the Kibokolo chiefs. We found out their hiding-places after much labour, and more than once succeeded in getting them to come to the station to talk over matters. Many were anxious to return, but quite a number of the people had settled in other towns where they had relatives.

I quote from a letter I wrote to Mr. Baynes: "After five months of great anxiety and waiting, we are at last able to send a more favourable report of affairs at Kibokolo, and are now hoping that in a few weeks' time everything will be satisfactorily settled, and the scattered natives rebuilding their homes around us. For months past we have been wondering whether the Portuguese Government would follow up their quarrel with the Kibokolo chiefs, or whether they would consider the destruction of the towns sufficient punishment. A month or two ago I asked our friend Graham, at San Salvador, to seek a *friendly* interview with the Resident there, who is superior to the official at Makela, and to try to ascertain from him what the intentions of the Government were, and whether we could send Zombo carriers to Matadi for our loads. I felt confident that we could rely on him, for he and I have known each other for some years. He was very kind, but said that the matter had been referred to the Governor at Cabinda *direct* from the Resident at Makela, and that until

he received the Governor's orders he could do nothing in the matter, or give us any positive assurance that nothing further would be done to the natives ; but he emphatically declared that we could send any carriers we liked for loads, and he would see that they were protected. Our carriers have been going and coming since then and have not been molested in any way.

" Last mail the courier brought us a letter from Mrs. Graham, written at the request of the Resident, saying that the Kibokolo affair had been placed in his hands for settlement by the Governor, and that the whole matter was left to his discretion. Now, having heard through me that the natives of Kibokolo wished to return and rebuild their towns, he wished me to call the chiefs together to a palaver, and tell them what his decision was. He will allow them to return on the condition that the chiefs go to San Salvador and ask his permission, and hear from him the law for the future. If they do this, then they may rebuild in peace, and he will not demand any prisoners, or give them any further punishment. He also guaranteed that they should have safe conduct to and from San Salvador. But should they refuse to do this, or rebuild their towns without asking his permission, then he would come himself and destroy their towns again.

" Last week we had the chiefs here on the station to hear what we had to tell them. After explaining to them the contents of the letter, we took great pains to urge them to obey the Government, and advised them to go to see the Resident at San Salvador. I must confess that I had very little hope of their doing anything reasonable, for on each occasion we had seen them previously these chiefs would do nothing

but vow vengeance on their enemies, whom they considered were the cause of all their troubles and woes. However, God answered our prayers, and we were delighted by their reception of the message. The principal chief was absent, but he was represented by his two headmen, who explained that the chief himself was too drunk to walk ! Next day they all met to discuss the matter, and then came to inform me that they would go to Congo and do all that the Resident wanted. Luvumbu, the principal chief, was with them this time, and for the first time in my experience I detected a friendly look in his face. He has been an enemy to us, and to our teaching, from the beginning. Possibly he begins to think that we are their friends after all. They hope to go to Congo in about three weeks from now, and we earnestly pray that nothing further will happen to prevent a peaceable ending of all our troubles."

After much palaver and persuasion the chiefs gathered enough courage to accept the Resident's overtures, and the visit to San Salvador was made in April, 1903. The brethren did everything possible for them, and introduced them to Resident Leal. All went well, and the folk returned very well satisfied with the authorities and with themselves. They were much astonished at all they saw, and were especially impressed with the schools and everything at the Mission. In many ways the enforced pilgrimage of penance to San Salvador had a steadying effect upon their minds, and supplied a lesson that they would not easily forget. The Resident had pressed them to rebuild at once, and told them that before the end of the dry season he himself would pay a visit to Kibokolo. He hoped all the towns would be rebuilt by then.

So the rebuilding was commenced, and gradually the women and children returned, though in small numbers. As a matter of fact, the district had less than half the population it had before. While the natives were rebuilding their towns we hurried on with the construction of our station. We put up a temporary chapel to hold about 400 or 500 people, so as to be ready for any possible development. The Bowskills arrived just in time for the opening services, which Mr. Bowskill describes in the following letter:

"And now I must come to the really important part of this letter. I have to tell you of another chapel opening. When I first came to Congo I had the great joy and privilege of being present at the opening of the splendid chapel at San Salvador. I wrote home a full account of it, but I never thought then that on my next return to Congo I should be writing a similar letter. But such is the case, and for this I am glad.

"The first chapel has been erected and opened in Zombo. The architect and builder of the San Salvador chapel was Mr. Lewis, and now he has performed the same service for Zombo. This new chapel is a fine building, and will accommodate about 500 people. Its walls are corrugated iron, and it is thickly thatched with grass. It is really an imposing structure in this part of the world, and it is deliciously cool inside. The natives seem very pleased with it, and our first service was really a success."

Thus began a brighter era for our Mission, and from this time onwards the attitude of the people decidedly changed towards us. By the end of the year we were having regular services, and the day school attendance rose to 36. Mrs. Lewis had succeeded

at last in getting a class of women on Sunday afternoons, and she was able to report an attendance of 15, besides the schoolgirls.

The same week the Bowskills arrived we also had the promised visit of the Governor of Portuguese Congo. He was on a tour of inspection, and had been to San Salvador. Senhor Leal, the Resident at San Salvador, and the Resident at Makela, with another officer, were in attendance. They stayed with us two days and occupied one of our bungalows. The Governor seemed to take great pains to know the true situation, and discussed privately with me the difficulties with the natives. He then sent for the chiefs of the district and interviewed them through the Government interpreter. Nkila Nkosi came with his followers in great style with the idea of making an impression, but it was galling to him that the Governor had come to Kibokolo and not to him.

The great public palaver on the second day was imposing, and certainly did a deal of good. The Governor addressed the chiefs at great length, and charged them to live at peace with one another. He told them that the only way for them to be happy and prosperous was to learn from the missionaries, and send their children to school. He announced that nothing would be done with regard to past offences, but warned them that if any such incident as killing people happened again he would be very severe. We really enjoyed the two days, although it gave the ladies a deal of work preparing meals for eight white folk.

In February, 1904, Mrs. Lewis and I arranged to meet Bentley at Kimpemba, a border town where Wathen had an outpost. He wanted to discuss with me matters in connection with sub-stations on the boundary between Belgian and Portuguese Congo.

He had reached the town a day before we did, and we found him in a sad state of health. He had been down with influenza, and was not fit to be away from home. He was always thus, and would never give in. That night he went down with a nasty fever, and it was difficult to nurse him in a rough native hut with no conveniences or comfort. Fortunately, we had plenty of fowls to make strong soups, and in three days he was much better. His cough was distressing, and we were very anxious about him. He carried out his promise to my wife to go back to Wathen without delay and to postpone his visit to other parts of his district until a later date. This journey turned out to be his last, for his bodily strength gave out, and in a few months he had to go home.

My wife and I hurried back to Kibokolo, as the heavy rains were coming on. There was much to do to finish Hooper's new bungalow before he returned in the dry season with his bride. Mr. and Mrs. Bowskill were new to the people and we were somewhat anxious.

Then occurred a series of events that revealed the dire straits of missionaries labouring in lonely stations with a much under-manned staff. At that time it took four days to get a letter from Kibokolo to San Salvador, and six to make the journey ourselves. In the rainy season we were practically isolated when the rivers were in flood.

We had not been back many weeks before a distress message reached us from San Salvador, crying for help. The Grahams had gone home on furlough, and Phillips had taken up duties at Matadi in Lawson Forfeitt's place. Mr. and Mrs. Wooding and Mr. and Mrs. Mayo were left to maintain the work at San Salvador, which had assumed a new magnitude

of late years. Wooding went down with fever, which caused grave anxiety for weeks. The Portuguese Resident, also, was very ill, and a special messenger was despatched to Matadi requesting advice from Dr. Sims. This man never reached Matadi, for he was killed by an elephant on the way. Under this final blow, and overstrained by anxiety for his colleague, Mayo collapsed, and the two wives were occupied with nursing their husbands. For fourteen days Mrs. Mayo nursed her husband, but he grew worse. When he was delirious, Wooding, still in fever, crept to the side of his colleague, and finally, as an act of despair, wrote a note to me asking for help. A man did the journey in three days.

Now came the problem. Mrs. Bowskill was in delicate health, and it was out of the question for her to go. My wife said that this was a woman's business, for whatever happened to Mayo, Mrs. Mayo would need a woman's love and sympathy. It is generally safe in Congo to presume the worst and be prepared for it. As Mr. Hawker puts it in his admirable memoir: "When Mrs. Lewis said 'I must,' her friends knew that they were confronted by finality, and she had her way."

That "Mission of Mercy" cannot be retold here. It was a forced march in the rainiest season known for years, and Mrs. Lewis travelled alone with wild Zombo carriers, who, however, did valiantly on this occasion, as witnessed by their utter exhaustion when they arrived at the Mission Station at San Salvador. Mayo had then been dead two days, and his poor wife was distracted with grief. And there was further nursing to be done before the return journey was made, for Mrs. Wooding also fell ill.

It was clear that Mrs. Mayo should leave for

England as soon as possible. A vain attempt was made to take her to Matadi, and my wife was going to accompany her, but the River Lunda was in flood and it was impossible. They returned to San Salvador, and started immediately for Kibokolo, leaving the Woodings alone, but in better health. Mrs. Mayo stayed with us for about a month, and rendered valuable service in our school of Zombo savages. Then Pinnock, who had just returned from his furlough, accompanied her to Matadi, whence she sailed for England. Fortunately for the Mission, later on she married Kirkland, with whom she has since laboured for many years at Mabaya and Stanley Pool.

CHAPTER XXII

Further Travels

It cannot be too often repeated that a man should never be considered a full missionary until he has taken to himself a wife, always supposing the said wife to be suitable. Miss Painter had been preparing herself for missionary life on the Congo by nursing for two or three years in a Bristol institution, and also had some practice in dispensary work. We had met her on several occasions while at home on furlough, and it was, therefore, a great pleasure to us, and especially to my wife, to welcome her to Kibokolo as Mrs. Hooper, in August, 1904. The townspeople, as well as the Mission children, turned out in large numbers to welcome them. Their new house had been completed during Hooper's absence. It was well decorated with palms and flowers for the occasion, and Mrs. Hooper was charmed with her new African home. She entered heartily into the Station life, and, with my wife, specialised on the women and girls' department. Soon the women's work developed rapidly, and our new colleague took charge of the women's dispensary, which had become the centre of attraction for the sick folk.

The arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Hooper set my wife and myself free for pioneer work to the east and south of Zombo. Mrs. Bowskill had been obliged to go home to England, and Bowskill went back to San Salvador, where he was badly needed. However, with Pinnock and the Hoopers I had no anxiety

about Kibokolo, and the greater part of the dry season was spent in prospecting for future work.

Our first visit was to Ndamba. Until lately very little was known about this district, except that it was spoken of as the "Cow country" by the Kongos. Kongos and Zombos went thither to buy cattle, and traded them with the white men at Matadi and the coast. We had been led to believe that Ndamba was a land literally "flowing with milk and honey," where cattle grazed contentedly in rich and picturesque valleys, and where the women cooked their cassava in fresh frothy milk! Alas, missionaries still have to import their milk from that wonderful "condensed cow" that thrives in Switzerland.

Our chief aim was to gather information and make a rough map of the country, and, of course, to make ourselves known to the natives. We travelled leisurely, sleeping at many places. On the fifth evening we reached Kinzau a Mbakala, which was considered the principal town. We were disappointed at finding the people shy of us, until later in the evening we discovered the reason. Mata strolled into the chief's enclosure and found eight or ten men in chains, some of them fixed in the wooden slave "forks," which held them tightly around the neck. It was a gang of slaves, and the chief thought I had come to rescue them. A messenger was dispatched to the neighbouring towns, calling the headmen to a conference, with the result that the men were set at liberty.

Two hours' march next morning brought us to a trading station where five Portuguese had built grass houses for trade. I gathered much information from them. They had tried to settle on the other side of the Nkisi River, but had met with too much opposition from the people. This was not encouraging, but we

hastened on, for we were anxious to cross that river to Sonso. We travelled in short marches for four days till we came to the Nkisi. On the fourth morning I was detained at a village talking to a group of natives. I was a long way behind the rest. As I was approaching Nlanda I heard shouting ahead, a sure indication of trouble : then I saw about six of my carriers running towards me in great excitement. They had thrown down their loads by the road-side and came as for their life. A moment later I could hear the native guns in the distance. Where was Mrs. Lewis? I was told that she was just outside the town, that she had refused to get out of her hammock, and that the grass was too thick for the carriers to turn round. I was soon on the scene, and the fright on the faces of the two hammock men was laughable. I passed to the front and said, " Come along," and we approached the entrance to the town. We found it guarded by armed men, but they were so astonished that they simply ran and hid themselves in the bush, while we entered into the village and waited till the people returned.

We slept there two nights, and by that time things had become quiet again. However, my carriers had heard so many wild stories about the " other side of the river," that nothing would induce them to cross, and they insisted on returning to Zombo at once. Finally we made a compromise, and they agreed to make a circular route along the Nkisi River to Nkama Ntambu, and then from there to Kibokolo. This was really a valuable experience and it added a new district to my map, but I was sadly disappointed at not seeing the real cow country.

After reaching home, we began preparations immediately for an extended journey to the south-west,

Kongo dia Nzolo
Kongo dia Kalu
Tungwa
Lamba
Nsona Lambe
Mb. Ewunze
Luagezi
Ndumbamuke
Ngombe
Nkenge
Kwimba
Nkawa
R. Fula
Kumpangu
Kinguda
Diadia
Mbanza
Makela
Mb. Makela (Medina's)
Mb. Kidua
Kimbala
Mayanga
Ngombe
Mpalabala
Konzo
Mpangala Zombo
Ntandi
Luwidi
Kibulungu
Kimbwanga
R. Lusengele
Lusengele
Fyanga
Kola
R. Luovo
NKISI R.
Kimalomba
Kibokolo
Mpangala
Nsala
Kituangu
Kilumbu
Nsuku
Kinkombo
Kimvemba
Lukala
Kilumbe
Nkenge
Nkula
Kinsala
Nkama Ntambu
Kiyembe
Kinsambu
Kimpasi
Kindaka
Kunaya
Kumpanzu
Kilmungombe
Kinsanga
Kambondo
Mb. Ndombo
Konzo
Ntondo
Kinsamba
Kinzau-a-Mbakala
Nsongo
Sangi
Ngombe
Kimbungu
Mbumba H.
Lucka
Moza
Konzo
Kimbondi
Mpete
Kimbambi
Nkenge
Kintamba
Mankosi
Kindundu
Kusipi
Kitela
Canoe Ferry
Kintulongo
Kiwanga
Mbidizi R.
Ntampa
Yongu
Kongo dia Kalu
Luvemba
(Canoe Ferry)
R. Mbidizi
Canoe Ferry
R. Lucka
Mbemba
Mbumba
Kimwanda
Lumbi
R. Lufunde
Kimbubuzi
Muntuwa
Mambambi
Tumba
Luwaya
Luwemba
Mpumbu
Meuse
Kwimba
Mpandola
Tumba
Luwaya
Kinkombo
Kimvemba
Kilumbu
Kituangu
Malongwa
Nkama Ntambu
Kiyembe
Kinsambu
Kimpasi
Kindaka
Kunaya
Kumpanzu
Kilmungombe
Kinsanga
Kambondo
Mb. Ndombo
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Kintulongo
Kiwanga
Mbidizi R.
Ntampa
Yongu
Kongo dia Kalu
Luvemba
(Canoe Ferry)
R. Mbidizi
Canoe Ferry
R. Lucka
Mbemba
Mbumba
Kimwanda
Lumbi
R. Lufunde
Kimbubuzi
Muntuwa
Mambambi
Nsoni
Lunda
Kinsengele
Lovo
Kinganga
Belem Hill
Etoto
Lembelwa
Mbundu
Kiweyi
Sunsa
Mwingu
Nkakala
Kimpangu
Lemvo
Ndungani
Kipaku
Pembezi
Kimalu
Londe
Kimvangi
Zambo
Ntalani
Kimakanga
Lubamba
Vunda
Kimbenga
Vemadia
S. SALVADOR
Nzonza
Nkanka
Sangila
Kialungwa
Mb. Lukuti
Ngandu
Kintinu
Luwanika
Nkwankwa
Ngwawanu
Nkenge
Lembelwa
Yongo
Yalama
Bangu
Loma
Mbutu
Kimpanzu
Yika
Nsinga
Manselele
Etoto
Mungu
Koma
Kikumbwelu
Tadu
Nkamba
Kibunzi
Bangu
Mbulu
Lembelwa
Nsala
Kiwanga
Kikunga
Luanika
Mpeveleka
Wawa
Arth. Falls
Kivulu
Nkwankwa
Luwanika
Kialungwa
Sangila
Vemadia
Lubamba
Kimvangi
Kimakanga
Pembezi
Kimpangu
Kinganga
Kinsengele
Lovo
Nsoni
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Belem Hill
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Kimwanda
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Kitela
Kusipi
Mankosi
Kindundu
Kintamba
Nkenge
Kimbambi
Mpete
Konzo
Kimbondi
Moza
Lucka
Mbumba H.
Kimbungu
Ngombe
Nsongo
Sangi
Kinzau-a-Mbakala
Kimpasi
Kindaka
Kunaya
Kumpanzu
Kilmungombe
Kinsanga
Kambondo
Mb. Ndombo
Konzo
Ntondo
Kinsamba
Kimpasi
Kiyembe
Nkama Ntambu
Malongwa
Kinsala
Nkula
Nkenge
Kilumbe
Lukala
Luwakala
Kituangu
Kilumbu
Kimvemba
Kinkombo
Nsuku
Lembelwa
Nsala
Mpangala
Kibokolo
Kimalomba
Kola
Fyanga
Lusengele
R. Lusengele
R. Luovo
NKISI R.
Luwidi
Ntandi
Mpangala Zombo
Konzo
Mpalabala
Ngombe
Mayanga
Etoto
Manselele
Nsinga
Mbutu
Kimpanzu
Yika
Kwimba
Nkawa
R. Fula
Kumpangu
Kinguda
Diadia
Mbanza
Makela
Mb. Makela (Medina's)
Mb. Kidua
Kimbala
Kikumbwelu
Tadu
Nkamba
Kibunzi
Bangu
Mbulu
Lembelwa
Nsala
Kiwanga
Kikunga
Luanika
Mpeveleka
Wawa
Arth. Falls
Kivulu
Nkwankwa
Luwanika
Kialungwa
Sangila
Vemadia
Lubamba
Kimvangi
Kimakanga
Pembezi
Kimpangu
Kinganga
Kinsengele
Lovo
Nsoni
Lunda
Mbundu
Kiweyi
Sunsa
Mwingu
Nkakala
Kimpangu
Lemvo
Ndungani
Kipaku
Zambo
Ntalani
Kimalu
Londe
Kimbenga
Vunda

to explore the country between us and Mabaya, where Mr. and Mrs. Cameron had just established the Silver Jubilee Station. There was a vast stretch of country between Zombo and Mabaya as yet unexplored, and to the south of Kibokolo there is nothing known of that fertile land lying between Zombo and the Loanda-Ambaca railway. As this must be the direction in which to extend our itineraries, I was most anxious to "spy out the land" in preparation for this extension.

This journey through the Nkusu district left a deep impression on my mind at the time. I had never seen so much evidence of heathenism and cruel customs as I did then. When only three days out of Kibokolo, as we entered a town about mid-day, we found that a funeral feast was in progress, and a crowd of women were chanting a funeral dirge. The day before a woman had died after giving birth to a baby girl. As she did not belong to a big family—perhaps she was only a slave—she was being buried immediately. There was a river close by, and the inhabitants disposed of their dead by throwing the bodies into it. Our boys and carriers watched the preparations, and seeing that a hot discussion had arisen between them and the townsfolk, I hurried to the scene. I found that the grandmother was in the act of tying a four days' old baby to the neck of the dead mother. Our men had protested, and a scuffle had followed. I picked up the child and held it away from the old granny, who was furious. The townsmen tried to quiet her by saying that the white man would be leaving in the morning and she could then throw the child after the mother. My wife washed the little mite and fed it with tinned milk, and next morning sent it back to Mrs. Hooper at Kibokolo. However, the child had been so hardly dealt with from the moment of birth

(for a day and a half she had been left sucking the breast of her dead mother !) that she only lived about ten days. I mention this as an example of what was the common custom in the whole land before missionaries went amongst the people.

Never before had I seen so many of the " sacred groves " of the secret societies. We came across two or three of them in a day's march. The entrance to the forest was marked by elaborate but coarse carvings in wood, not far from the market-places, and the " Brotherhoods " could be easily distinguished by the cloths worn and the pipe-clay marks on their bodies. They did not molest us in any way, but these " cults " are the curse of the land.

One is tempted here to make a digression into a discussion of native beliefs and customs which dominated the whole country twenty and thirty years ago, but lack of space forbids it. It is to be hoped that some of my brethren will collect sufficient data to give us a thorough insight to the real inwardness of African spiritual conceptions as revealed in the fetish rites of these secret guilds. We want somebody to do for Congo what Dr. Nassau has done for the Gabun district and Dr. Donald Fraser for the Blantyre regions of East Central Africa. I am convinced that underneath the silly and often cruel and immoral customs which we Europeans have ridiculed, there is a deep current of truth which suggests some profound thinking on the part of the African peoples. There is always present the soul's quest after the living and invisible God. These crude expressions of their spiritual conceptions and convictions are the foundation upon which the whole social fabric is built, and it is important that they should be studied carefully by those who are working for the general

uplift of the African races. Missions are more effective to-day than they were, say, fifty years ago, inasmuch as the men engaged in the work of evangelism have taken seriously to the study of native thought and religion. If you want to understand any nation, you must study that nation in its worship. African animism may be the lowest form of religion, but it is an expression of the spiritual, and therefore worthy of careful consideration.

Leaving the Nkusu district, we descended into the low country, and after crossing the Lukunga River in a canoe-ferry, made our way to Mbembe. This is an old post of the Portuguese, where, about a hundred years ago, with the help of Cornish miners, they worked some rich copper deposits. The distance from the coast and the difficulty of transport (the slave trade notwithstanding) made the business unprofitable, and the place was abandoned. It was interesting to visit the old workings and the ruins.

Two days' journey to the West brought us to Mabaya, and we spent a happy week with our friends there. On the Sunday we had great congregations, and Mrs. Cameron gathered a splendid company of women for my wife to address. The people at Mabaya are of the same stock as the Kongos, and have always kept in touch with San Salvador.

The surrounding country did not appear prosperous, and when epidemic after epidemic of smallpox and sleeping-sickness had decimated the population, it was not altogether a surprise that the station had to be abandoned. It is now held as a sub-station to San Salvador.

We returned by a different route, taking the San Salvador road for three days until we crossed the Mbrizi River and reached the Kimbubuzi market.

From there we took the direct route up the Lufundu valley to the Nkusu district. We were glad to be once more on the plateau with its more prosperous villages and healthier breezes.

The result of the journey was to confirm me in the opinion that Kibokolo was built in the right place, on the way to the centres of larger populations along the main trade route to the Loanda hinterland.

The early rains had already fallen in Zombo before we arrived, in the first week in October, and for nearly three months we remained at home to give the Hoopers an opportunity of visiting the district. The people of Kibokolo were very slow in rebuilding, and we were disappointed that no great advance had been made. There never was a more difficult field, and yet there was something in the Zombos that attracted us ; they were a strong and fearless people, and once we had won them over to our teaching they would be equally strong in their attachment to the Gospel.

Immediately after our Christmas festivities, Mrs. Lewis and I packed up once again to attend the United Conference at Kinshasa, during the second week of the new year, 1906. Portuguese Congo was awkwardly situated for attending conferences because it meant a long overland journey before we reached the railway. This partly explains why this was the one and only Conference I ever attempted. It was well worth the effort, and we were fortunate in escaping heavy rains on the road.

The value of the United Conference, where all the Protestant Missions meet to discuss plans of work, is great, one of its benefits being that it opens up a wide field for co-operation. These conferences have enabled the various societies not only to avoid overlapping in Christian work, but they have resulted in joint efforts

in matters of importance, such as hostels at Matadi, Thysville and Kinshasa. The Kimpese Training College was the direct result of this 1906 Conference. The spirit of co-operation and unity has been manifest in all these periodical gatherings. Papers read by competent men have been freely discussed at the sessions, bringing the whole Protestant mind and strength into focus, with wonderful results.

The chief pleasure to me on this occasion was to make the personal acquaintance of colleagues whom I had never seen before. I met there for the first time two of my fellow-countrymen who had laboured well and long in connection with sister missions. They were Henry Richards, of Mbanza Manteka, and Thomas Hope Morgan, of the Congo Balolo Mission. Richards hailed from Cardiff, one of the first pioneers sent out from Tredegarville Church, and supported mainly by John and Richard Cory. He, with several others, was transferred when the Livingstone Inland Mission was taken over by the American Baptist Missionary Union. He retired from active service a few years ago, and has since passed to his reward. Hope Morgan was a native of Brynmawr, and went out to Congo as a Missionary of the Regions Beyond Mission. He also retired, and went to Canada, where he is doing good work still in Toronto.

The Conference opened under the Presidency of Mr. Harvey, another of the early pioneers taken over by the American Baptists. Some of those present had witnessed something of the Welsh Revival when on furlough, and I had the honour of reading a special paper on the subject, written by the late Principal Edwards, and the spirit of revival seemed to grip us. On the second day the whole Conference was plunged into grief by the arrival from Matadi

of Lawson Forfeitt, with the news, just received by cablegram, of the death of Dr. Holman Bentley, at Bristol. It came as a tremendous shock to everybody, and most of all to his old friend and comrade, George Grenfell. One of the sessions was turned into a Memorial Service. This was Sunday morning, and Grenfell gave the address, full of dignified pathos and power. It was a solemn moment when the Conference sang the hymn :

> "Captain and Saviour of the host
> Of Christian chivalry,
> We thank Thee for our comrade true,
> Now summoned up to Thee."

Then followed the Conference sermon by the President, and in the afternoon a great open-air service was held for the Upper and Lower river people who were present, Richards preaching in Kongo, and James Clark in Bobangi. The final gathering was a great united Communion Service, also held in the open air.

Our own missionaries stayed on at Kinshasa after the United Conference, for a Committee of our own. Here again the shadow of the death of Bentley cast a gloom over our deliberations.

At the time Grenfell was much troubled about the Congo atrocities and many other things. My wife and I appreciated the fellowship of those few days, and somehow we were not astonished when just six months later, on the 1st July, 1906, he himself succumbed to a severe attack of hæmaturic fever at Basoko. Coming as it did so soon after the death of Holman Bentley, the passing of Grenfell, and the consequent loss to the Mission in the extension work towards the east, was a severe blow to us all. He was the most lovable of men, and one who could always be relied upon.

Grenfell was the last of that first band of intrepid pioneers who founded the Congo Mission. Comber, Hartland, Bentley and Grenfell are four names inseparably associated with it. All of the first party, except Crudgington, who was transferred to India and is still happily with us in the Jubilee year, have been called Home to their rest. Each in his way had great gifts. While Bentley will be remembered as compiler of the Kongo Grammar and for his literary work, Grenfell will ever stand out as the explorer who discovered the Mobangi, mapped the Upper Congo, made extensive journeys into the interior, and yet was a missionary first and last, a man wholly devoted to the work of the Kingdom of God upon earth. His "Life" has been written by no less a person than Sir Harry Johnston, in two large volumes, and a shorter "Life," in one volume, by his old friend and fellow student, George Hawker. The interest in his labours is still so great that a more recent biography, written by H. L. Hemmens, has attracted considerable attention.

CHAPTER XXIII

Changes

After the excitement of Conference, and meeting with so many colleagues hitherto known to us only by name, we returned to Kibokolo, travelling by train to Tumba. Perhaps never before did I appreciate the advantages and disadvantages of an inland station far away from the usual route of missionaries going *up river*. But this is a world of compensations, and in a sense I was glad to prosecute my work in a lonely place uninterrupted by many visitors. When one has acquired the lonely habit, it is difficult to live in a crowd.

Hooper had been called to give help at Mabaya station for a few months, and Pinnock and ourselves were alone through the heavy rains. My own health was not good, but not bad enough to say I was ill. Those who have lived long in the tropics understand this "off-colour" feeling, for all of us get it sooner or later.

It was a great delight to welcome our old friends, the Grahams, from San Salvador. They had been on a trip visiting their sub-stations on their eastern boundary, and extended it to pay us a visit. They had not been to Zombo before, and seeing our "savages" gave them a new experience. We simply abandoned ourselves to the enjoyment of the occasion. The ladies were in their glory, discussing plans for women's work, and they seemed to spend their time from morning till night at the dispensary or in classes.

Graham and I, like two old warriors, talked of the past and fought our former battles over again. I am afraid we broke all rules about early bed-going, for there were many theological questions left over, "not quite settled," from our San Salvador days. When the night grew long and the battle of words waxed hot, Mrs. Graham, almost in despair, would say, "Oh, dear, this *is* like old times." It was!

During their visit we had our first baptism at Kibokolo, that of a San Salvador girl who had come to my wife four years before. We went down to the stream running at the foot of our grounds, singing one of our baptism hymns, and this attracted a little crowd of Zombos, curious to know what we were doing. Graham conducted the service, and I baptized. As there were among the carriers a number of San Salvador Christians, we went back to the church for a Communion Service, and Graham received the baptized girl as a member of the San Salvador church. No church had been formed in Zombo then. The first convert, Mayungululu, was baptized a year later by Hooper, while I was on furlough. As will appear presently, I was destined to be removed from the Kibokolo staff before seeing one Zombo gathered in as the result of my labours in the Gospel.

In September Hooper was able to return from Mabaya, as a new man had been appointed for that station. I had hoped to be able to stay on until the new year, but my fevers became more frequent, my strength declined, and the arrival of my strong colleague made it possible for us to leave before the rains came in full force, for Kibokolo was provided for. We decided to leave immediately, and at Matadi I saw Dr. Sims, who said I had been suffering from continued low fever for months, and, to my utter

astonishment, I had fever then. The s.s. *Bruxelles-ville* was sailing a few days later, and my wife and I were once more on the homeward voyage.

We landed at Southampton on the 12th of November, and took our friends in London by surprise. I refer to this illness here, because on the strength of my experience our official medical officer, Dr. Habershon, advised a shorter term of service for Congo missionaries.

On my arrival at Matadi, I found that a Conference of Representatives of the three Missions working on the Kongo-speaking area had been summoned to see if some definite step could be taken to establish a United Training College for the Lower River. This proposal had been discussed at the Kinshasa Conference, following an admirable paper by Laman, of the Swedish Society. The subject had been talked about freely among the brethren on the river for many months, and to my surprise, I found that there was a general feeling that I should take charge, if the respective Boards would agree to its establishment. All along, I had been a strong supporter of the United College idea, but when my name was proposed for the first President I began to repent. The Americans had a Training School already, with Harvey as Head, the Swedish had another under Laman's strong leadership, and I had certainly counted on one of them acting as Principal of the united venture. Owing to the entreaties of my friend, Harvey, I placed myself in their hands. It is fair to say that my wife's experience and success in work among women was one of the chief arguments why I should accept the position, and certainly it was the only argument that touched me.

Negotiations with the Home Boards necessarily

occupied much time, and the year of my furlough was taken up with future plans for the College. In January, 1908, I was able to launch our project in an article in the *Missionary Herald*, which I quote nearly in full :

" The very gratifying result which has attended our work on the Congo, and the rapid growth of the native Christian Church during the past few years, have brought the various missionary societies face to face with the problem of the better education of a native ministry. So urgent has this question become that for several years past it has occupied a prominent position in the joint Conferences of all the Protestant bodies labouring in that country.

" Fifteen months ago representatives of the American and British Baptist Missions met at Matadi to consider the possibility and advisability of establishing a United College for the training of native preachers, evangelists, and teachers in connection with the Missions which work within the Kongo-speaking area. There were some difficulties arising out of differences of dialects in use in the various Missions, but on talking over these matters, we found that most of these, if not all, could be surmounted, and the feeling of the brethren was wholly and strongly in favour of a joint institution for the three principal societies working on the Lower Congo and in Portuguese Congo. Negotiations were entered into with the Swedish Missionary Society, who were also desirous of joining. This Society, as well as the Americans, had training schools already in connection with their own work ; but all consider that a well-equipped United College would be an immense advantage to the cause of Christ in Congoland. Not only can the training be better and more economically done, but

a combined effort of all the Missions will have the supreme merit of uniting in Christian activity all the native churches in connection with the different societies. It is confidently hoped that this bringing together of our future native teachers and leaders will be a source of true strength to churches in the land, and unite them all in aggressive evangelistic work.

"All the friends of our Congo Mission will join us in thanking God that the time has now come for this advance, and I am glad to find great interest being exhibited by friends all over the country in the scheme.

"The location of the Institute will be at Kimpese, a point close to the Congo Railway, at a distance of about eighty miles from Matadi. Our American brethren in the early days secured a plot of ground of about thirty acres, with the intention of establishing a Mission Station at that place; but it was not occupied. This property is now to be transferred to the United College authority.

"The Constitution provides that in accord with the commonly understood position of evangelical churches, and also in accord with the ordinance of immersion on a profession of faith, the instruction given in the Institution shall be based upon the acceptance of the Old and New Testament Scriptures as an authoritative standard of faith and practice. The importance of strict regard for Scriptural teaching and the observance of the ordinances of the Church shall be fully recognised.

"The Institution is to be controlled by a Board of Trustees representing the three Missions. Three tutors have been appointed, one from each society, to form the Faculty of the College. This number is considered sufficient for the present, but as the work develops we shall require more assistance.

"It is proposed that we shall have in residence a number of students, who will be brought in from the various missions for a three years' course of training. Provision is also made for the training of young women who are, or will become, the wives of teachers, it being of the utmost importance to have trained women teachers for work among their Congo sisters.

"For the first few years the married teachers who are now in service at sub-stations will come in for special training. Arrangements will be made for them to live in native-built houses in the College grounds, husband and wife together. Later on, when the married people have received their course of training, we hope to open a special branch for young women likely to become wives of teachers and evangelists.

"In this educational work we attach great importance to the principle of a native ministry, and we shall avoid anything in the shape of an imitation 'white man.' Thus the life, housing, clothing and feeding will be in accord with native ideas, only insisting on cleanliness, decency and industry.

"The chief aim of the Institution will be to secure enlightened and intelligent teachers and evangelists, and to train them for evangelical work among their own people.

"The students will be required to do a certain amount of plantation and garden work to secure a supply of food for themselves. There will also be departments for teaching carpenters and blacksmiths, and a brick-making yard, so that they will be able, in their spheres of labour, to build their own houses and schools and chapels without monetary help from the native churches which employ them, and be in a

position to elevate the people by teaching them these crafts."

For the rest of our furlough we had our full share of Deputation work for the Society, which fortunately both of us enjoyed, and we had the most delightful holiday we ever had. Our dear friend, W. C. Parkinson, of Camden Road, had the charming habit of inviting my wife and myself when on furlough to a continental trip. It did him good to see us enjoy ourselves, for he always conducted us personally. He had already taken us to Switzerland, France and Norway, and this time, which also turned out to be the last, he took us to Cologne and the Rhine, thence to Stockholm to discuss the new College with head-quarters. After being there some days we crossed Sweden by the Grand Gotha Canal, and sailed home well satisfied with the world at large and with the Rhine and Stockholm in particular.

Then came a week in Peebles with Mr. Andrew Rose and family, and motoring over the Scotch hills. Motoring was the luxury of the few then, and all I know is that one of the guests got so inebriated with high speed that he was always asking for more.

So I end this chapter on the top-note of enjoyment.

CHAPTER XXIV

Kimpese and the Valley of the Shadow

When my wife and I sailed from Antwerp on the 11th of June, 1908, we had for a fellow-passenger Miss Spencer, of Manchester, going out to Congo to be married to Dr. Mercier Gamble of San Salvador. On several occasions we had met this lady when on visits to Manchester, and had, therefore, been looking forward to this voyage with more than usual pleasure. She was going to our old station, and we knew how the doctor had been counting on her coming to join him in the medical work there. There were also three missionaries belonging to Westcott's Mission on the Kasai travelling by the same vessel, and this enabled us to get a missionary table all through the voyage, in very pleasant company.

We did the usual landing at Teneriffe, and the new missionaries of the party thoroughly enjoyed the change. After that there was no excitement until we arrived at Boma on the 1st of July. This being "Foundation Day," the pier and streets were gaily decorated with flags, and bands were playing. There was a regatta in the afternoon, and a torchlight procession after dark, which made a pretty picture from the deck of the *Bruxellesville*.

Dr. Gamble arrived next morning from Matadi in a small rowing boat. He had been delayed on account of fever, but was by this time quite recovered. On Thursday, the 2nd of July, the wedding took place. This was a trying ordeal to the young people,

for it had to be done three times over. We all went ashore and attended at the Court of Justice, where the Judge performed the legal ceremony according to the law of the land. He appeared in full dress, and proceeded with his duties with solemn dignity. The British Consul was present, which served the purpose of a ceremony at the British Consulate. We then went to the American Mission, and Mr. and Mrs. Campbell, who always kept an open door for all missionaries at all conceivable times, had prepared tea, with the table richly decorated with fresh flowers from their garden. But before partaking of the good things, I conducted an English service in the chapel, and married the pair over again in Christian fashion, with a slight variation of the marriage formula. On the principle that a " threefold cord is not quickly broken " we considered that this man and woman were irrevocably bound together in holy matrimony, and neither of them has repented of the union celebrated that day.

After two or three days at our Mission Station in Matadi, we separated for our respective spheres. Our friends of the Brethren Mission left for the Upper River, and Dr. Gamble took his bride to her new home at San Salvador, where both rendered valiant service for the Mission at the new hospital which had recently been completed.

Ross Phillips, my friend and colleague of earlier years, had settled down to his new duties as Congo Secretary, and it was like a bit of old times over again during the week we remained at Matadi. All the business of the Mission at that time passed through the Matadi office, and it was found necessary to have a whole-time man to do it. The Committee were fortunate in securing the service of Mr. Norman, who

was a fully qualified accountant, for this work, and he had just joined the Matadi staff, working in conjunction with Ross Phillips. Norman had his whole heart in missionary work, and was always ready to help. He was very helpful at the inception of the College at Kimpese.

It was a keen disappointment to all of us that our friends of the Swedish Mission, after much consideration, decided not to join in this united venture at Kimpese. All our plans hitherto had been made with a view to supplying the need of the three missions operating in the Lower Congo, and the withdrawal of the Swedes necessitated considerable modifications in our scheme. The two Baptist societies decided to proceed without delay, and commenced building operations forthwith. Harvey and Dr. Sims of the American Mission were at Matadi, and they met Phillips and myself several times to confer as to further plans.

It was in the second week in July that Harvey and Dr. Sims accompanied us to Kimpese. At about two o'clock we arrived on the ground with our tent and a few necessary things, and found that the lads who had preceded us had made a small clearing on the highest point in the midst of the tall grass, and had erected a small one-roomed grass hut for our shelter. On the opposite hill, across a small stream, stood the buildings of a Roman Catholic Mission, and the native village was about half a mile farther on. The site was found to be flanked on two sides by well-shaded streams, with several springs inside its boundary giving an abundant supply of water for drinking purposes. Half an hour's walk away was the Lukunga River. The main drawback was the lowness of the ground compared with the surrounding country,

thus depriving us of the benefit of the cool breezes from the hills.

My wife and I took possession of the grass hut while our friends occupied the tent. A piece of cloth rigged up over the end of the hut, and a few trunks and packing cases, provided a dining- and sitting-room combined. The fly sheet of an old tent, supported by four posts, made an ideal open-air kitchen. It was all we wanted that day, and the party had their evening meal before dark. We then sat on camp chairs and boxes around a blazing fire and entertained each other with reminiscences of similar experiences in the good old days—for we were all men of the "Old Brigade."

This first night was one to be remembered. It was the first meeting of the Trustees of the New College on the Kimpese ground.

For the first few weeks the mosquitoes fought viciously for their rights, and evidently resented our intrusion upon their preserves. Not until we had cleared all the grass did this nuisance abate, and even then we had to resort to our mosquito netting early of an evening.

Snakes seemed to have a flourishing colony on this ground, too. Never was I so pestered with pythons, or boa constrictors as they are commonly called. These reptiles made their home in two pools of water not far away. In their nightly hunt for food they discovered that the white people on the hill kept chickens, and this was naturally more convenient to them than going elsewhere to hunt antelopes and other such game. I soon became an expert in capturing pythons, and did it in this way. I fixed a wire fence six feet high around the chicken house, to serve as a fowl run. The snakes found no

difficulty in climbing this wire netting, and got to the chickens easily enough. It was always five that they selected and killed for their meal, but after swallowing the birds they became so distended that they could not climb the wire netting for the return journey. In the morning they were found crawling round and round, and growing sleepy on their full meal, and it was easy to shoot them. Natives do not consider pythons to be "snakes," and their meat is much relished by most of the people, but each victim cost me five chickens and a cartridge. They measured generally from twelve to twenty feet in length.

It was not long before we began to get things into shape. I had a number of men to make a clearing, and my first concern was to put up a small building with corrugated iron walls and a grass roof, which would ultimately be used for a class-room. This did not take long to get ready, and we made it our home for several months while the permanent house was being built. Thanks to the Arthington Fund, we were able to get this constructed at home and sent out in parts, thus saving much time and worry. It was ready for occupation in February, and what a change from the first night camp scene !

In the beginning of September my American colleague, the Rev. Seymour E. Moon, arrived, and brought a contingent of workmen with him from Mbanza Manteka to build his house. Kimpese began to bustle with life and activity.

At the beginning of the year the men students arrived, to build their houses. Each one constructed his own grass house ; all were on the same plan, with a nice veranda in front. These grass houses later on gave place to brick ones, which the students

built as a part of their training. By the end of February all the buildings were ready, and the College work proper began.

Writing in the early days of May, 1909, I reviewed the work of the year in the following words :

" When we arrived here in July last we had only one small grass house for our shelter. The ground had to be cleared and laid out ; dwelling-houses and stores as well as lecture halls had to be erected, and before the work of teaching could be commenced nineteen two-roomed grass houses had to be built for the accommodation of the students. This was a great work, and we are grateful to God for the strength given us to open the College for actual teaching within nine months of our arrival on the ground.

" The 15th of March was a memorable day with us, the opening day of the first United Training College on the Congo. We had no great personages or any strangers to share in our festivities. My American colleague, Rev. S. E. Moon, and Mrs. Lewis and myself, had the students all to ourselves. The proceedings were very simple, and consisted only in an inaugural address from the Principal, in which he reviewed the work of the two Baptist societies on the Congo and the development of the native churches and native workers. The importance of the college work was insisted upon for all the teachers and their wives, that they might be better equipped for the Master's service in Congoland. Matters of conduct and discipline in the school were put before them and explained. Answering a question from one of the men, I told them that we were not going to make any rules or regulations, as we expected them in all things to conduct themselves as men of God, always mindful of the honour of the school. We started

by trusting them, and we hoped there never would be any necessity to formulate rules and regulations for their personal conduct. At the same time we shall at the commencement of each session make clear to all the students what is expected of them.

"We have now had seven weeks of uninterrupted study, and are most pleased with our first set of men and women. We have this session nineteen men and fourteen women, making the total number of students thirty-three. We consider this an excellent beginning, and next October we shall receive fresh ones. There are a number of applicants, but at present we cannot say how many we can receive.

"I undertook the work of this United College with considerable reluctance, and only under pressure from my brethren of the two missions. It has meant a great deal of hardship to Mrs. Lewis and myself. At our age rough work and poor accommodation in a country like this are very trying, but we have been wonderfully preserved through it all. For some months we were not in good health, but since getting into our new permanent house we have been much better. The anxiety about the successful issue of the College work was also great, and it is no small satisfaction to know that not only has the class work been started, but that everything has gone on smoothly with the students. Indeed, we have succeeded far better than I anticipated, and we are all very happy in the work.

"Much is due to the manner in which brethren from other stations have supported us, and I wish to record my deep appreciation of the confidence they have given me in this undertaking and of their brotherly love and sympathy. Moreover, the Trustees

THE NEW CHAPEL AT HIBOHOLO ON THE OPENING DAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH, 1925

of the institution have taken the deepest interest in all the work, and we greatly appreciate the complete confidence they have shown the staff.

"There is much to be done during the next two years in building permanent halls and lecture-rooms. We shall soon begin work on the main hall, which is to be a memorial to Dr. Bentley."

It was a very happy coincidence that during our first session we were honoured with the visit of M. Renkin, the Colonial Minister of the Belgian Government, who had come to make a tour of the colony. He had with him his charming wife and a suite of officials. The priests of the Roman Catholic Mission and ourselves united in decorating the road from the railway station, and when the party arrived by a special train they had a rousing reception. The Catholic Bishop of Tanganyika was one of the company, and he was greatly interested in the College work. The Minister took great interest in all the details, and expressed himself as being pleased with all he saw, and especially with the native character of the students' houses. Next day we gave them a great send-off at the station on their way up-river.

The first session actually ended in the middle of July, but the Trustees arrived on the first of that month to hold their meeting and to receive the report of the staff. Bowskill came a week earlier and brought with him his wife, so that she could help Mrs. Lewis in preparation for the gathering. There was a party of eleven for which to cater. Mrs. Moon had not yet been able to leave America because of the children, but she came for the beginning of the following session in October.

The meetings passed off happily and successfully, and there was much rejoicing and satisfaction expressed in the year's record. But the strain was too great for my wife, though by sheer force of will she kept on with her classes for the women and children during the terms. The long tension was too severe for her frail and exhausted body. She had been "out of sorts" for months, and when the stress and excitement were over she collapsed utterly. A week after the Trustees' meeting she went down with fever. It was the usual thing at first, and she passed the time by reading the Life of Grenfell, by George Hawker. Then suddenly there appeared the dreaded symptoms of hæmaturia in their worst form. She had read the closing paragraphs of Grenfell's "Life," and turned to me saying, "Hæmaturia killed Grenfell, and it is going to kill me." The railway station master very kindly telephoned to Matadi for help, and with his usual promptness Dr. Sims left by the first train for Kimpese. But when the doctor arrived she was better, and the worst symptoms abating: she had rallied considerably and in two weeks' time was able to sit up.

The news of my wife's serious illness had reached San Salvador and had caused great consternation among her old friends there. Dr. and Mrs. Gamble were due to go on furlough the following month, so when they heard of our plight they came to the rescue at once, and there was no option but to take my wife home. Both the doctor and his wife decided to come with us by the first steamer.

On board ship she felt the benefit of the sea air, and her recovery delighted us; but after five days the hæmaturia suddenly reappeared, and we all knew the seriousness of this. She turned to me and said quietly,

"Tom, you and I know as much as the doctors about this: I think I am dying, don't you?" I had to reply that I feared so. Then she busied herself with messages to all her friends, and especially talked about Camden Road Church and its pastor. For several days Dr. Gamble and the ship's doctor fought the disease untiringly, and day and night spared no effort to save her life. Her mind was clear to the end, and she was the only happy person in that cabin. She rebuked the doctors for their gloom, and noticing their sad faces a few hours before she died, she smilingly said, "One would think it was a terrible thing to die."

She had a great horror of being taken ashore to be buried in a strange place, and had always said that if she died on board ship she would like to be buried in the "grand old sea." We were in port at Dakar a few hours before she passed away, and she gave a sigh of relief when I told her that the ship was leaving port. That same afternoon the ship slowed down, and with the flag at half-mast, the Captain read the service on the lower deck in the presence of the officers and ship's company in their uniform; and the frail body was lowered and committed to the deep blue water of the Atlantic, off Cape Verde. M. Renkin, the Belgian Colonial Minister, and his wife were fellow passengers on this sad voyage, and both showed great concern about my wife's illness. They often referred to their visit to Kimpese. The Minister walked in the procession to the main deck and stood by me during the reading of the burial service.

My wife was a great missionary worker, as her colleagues have amply testified; and her influence on the Congo women is still fragrant at San Salvador, Kibokolo and Kimpese. She never had illusions about

missionary work in Africa, but with a strong heart she won through and served the B.M.S. and the Master faithfully and well in Cameroons and Congo for twenty-five years. She had counted the cost, and she joyfully paid the price. Her story has been beautifully written by her pastor and great friend, George Hawker, in "An Englishwoman's Twenty-five Years in Tropical Africa."

CHAPTER XXV

Unsettled Days and Return to Kimpese

The voyage home from Dakar will always be remembered by me for the extreme kindness of everybody on board ship, and more especially of Dr. and Mrs. Gamble. Mrs. Gamble had been as indefatigable in nursing my wife as her husband was in doctoring, and I owe to these two friends a debt of gratitude which I can never hope adequately to discharge. They were a tower of strength in time of great distress, and it has been my good fortune to retain this friendship through the years both in Congo and in the Homeland.

I naturally spent most of my furlough among the friends at Camden Road. I had been a member of the Church ever since my marriage twenty-three years before, and they had adopted me as one of themselves. Hitherto I had always looked upon them as friends of my wife, and it was an agreeable revelation to me to find that they were mine also, and that we drew nearer together than ever before. The bond of union between the pastor and myself became more intimate, and we spent much time together in sweet and confidential converse. George Hawker and I understood each other, and this mutual understanding has continued to the present day, when we are both approaching the dimly marked boundary of the Land of Beulah. During the last few years we have walked together in the sunshine and the shadow ; we have tasted of the sweet and the

bitter of life, but never have we lost the clear vision of Him who is always Love.

My sister-in-law, Mrs. Percival, and her two daughters, living at Tufnell Park, were the only near living relatives of my wife, and there was always a corner for me at their home. As I pen these words, the youngest daughter, Beatrice, is the only one left.

Among the many letters sent to meet me at Antwerp was one from our good friends, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Parkinson, insisting that I should make my home with them at Hornsey during my sojourn in this country. This kind invitation I was glad to accept, and the happy fellowship with them and the family for ten months was very congenial and helpful to me. This afforded me the extra opportunity occasionally to enjoy the ministry of Dr. Charles Brown at Ferme Park, of which church the Parkinsons were members. Many missionaries, particularly those of the Zenana Mission, as the Women's Association was then called, remember with gratitude the hospitality of this home, for I was not by any means the only one to find a welcome at Carleton House.

The Rev. John Brown Myers, the Home Secretary of the B.M.S., was kind enough to free me from deputation engagements during the winter on account of my health, and I took advantage of this to obtain some knowledge of plumbing. I was most anxious to make as good a job as possible of our College buildings at Kimpese, and had often felt my incompetence in this special branch. I therefore arranged for a three months' course at a North London Institute, with a view of training some of the students at Kimpese in this trade. I wanted to acquire some technical knowledge and experience in beating lead and wiping joints, as well as an insight into the principles

of construction, and I thoroughly enjoyed these three months in a technical school, sometimes fancying myself a young lad again. I was granted the extra privilege of spending all my mornings doing jobs in the workshop under the guidance of an elderly Scotsman who took very keen interest in this unusual sort of pupil. He knew all about the Scottish missions in Africa, but he had never heard of such a person as a Baptist Missionary. He owned that a missionary with a will to succeed can become a good plumber in a very short time. We were great chums, and I owed him much before I left.

My health had suffered more than I at first realised, and it was well that the College Trustees had provided for my absence. George Thomas and Frame came to the rescue from Wathen, and carried on my work in the classes. Later on Mr. and Mrs. Graham came from San Salvador, and remained at their post till the end of the session. Mr. Moon took my place as Principal, and with some help from the American stations Kimpese did not suffer. Mrs. Moon had arrived from America in time for the beginning of the session, and took up her work among the women students with commendable pluck and courage. So I had no anxiety as to the work on the field.

Before my hurried departure with my wife, the Trustees had already approved of plans to make the main building at Kimpese a Memorial Hall to Dr. Holman Bentley. There were other names, notably Richards and Harvey, equally worthy of being in a special way honoured in connection with this Training Institution, but fortunately for us these comrades had not then qualified for the "In Memoriam" distinction: they were still with us. I venture to hope that both these names shall in some way be ultimately associated

with Kimpese. Both have since received the home-call and the "Well done" of their Master, and I have no doubt that their work will have a worthy memorial there. Our brother Harvey was the chief mover and instigator at the inception of the College, and his name ought to be held in greatest honour.

In the meantime the Holman Bentley Memorial Hall, after various checks and delays, has been completed, and its handsome tower, seen from long distances, gives the place a distinguished appearance. I had only the pleasure of making plans and preparing a few of the stones. The credit of the work belongs to Moon as Principal, and to Carpenter as master-builder. But this is bringing history forward to the year 1928, when the Hall was opened in the presence of a distinguished company from the various mission stations and from America. It was the Jubilee Year of our Congo Mission.

To continue my narrative I return to June, 1910, when I left England once again to reach Kimpese in time to allow the Moons to take a short holiday before the beginning of another session. On this voyage I had as fellow passengers Nurse Bell and Miss Patterson, going out for the first time to San Salvador, and it was a happy arrangement, for by the time we reached the Congo River they knew all I knew of San Salvador and the people. Miss Patterson later married Mr. Claridge, one of our missionaries on the station staff, and they afterwards joined the South African Mission. Mr. Claridge died on his travels in the interior, and his wife is still bravely labouring on in the same work. Nurse Bell became a member of the San Salvador hospital staff and has since done a great work there.

Shortly after arriving at Kimpese I received a welcome visit from our old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Howell, of Kinshasa. They invited themselves for a fortnight's holiday, but it was an ill-disguised intrigue on their part, for I knew the visit was planned at some inconvenience to themselves for the purpose of keeping me company and cheering my lonely heart. John Howell was one of those practical men whose presence was a constant delight, especially when there was hard work to be done. Most of our time was spent in blasting stone for the Bentley Memorial Hall. We borrowed some tools, with powder and dynamite, from some of our Belgian friends, and set to work in the upper part of the stream, where it enters into our domain over large boulders of rock. We made good use of the explosives and secured a fine pile of stones for use in the building. That was our first contribution towards it.

I was naturally anxious to apply my recent lessons in plumbing to the water supply and tanks of the dwelling-houses. The connections and fittings gave me little or no trouble, but the force pump erected in the valley was not a success, and my colleagues have since successfully contrived an hydraulic ram to supply all the needed water.

I was glad when October came and the students returned to their studies. We still had eight of the original men with their wives, and they formed the advanced classes of third-year men. It was delightful to witness their love for their work, and their eagerness for further studies augured well for the success of the institution. Some of us had feared that these African students would be satisfied with a superficial knowledge of the subjects taught them in the classes, and that they would return to their towns with a

veneer of attainments just enough to give them a show of superiority over their uneducated brothers. The African generally has given the impression that his chief desire is to take what he can from his white master and copy him as far as convenient, but that he never wants to plunge into the depth and find out things for himself. He has not been credited with a passion for hard work or with seeking knowledge for its own sake. The black man is a great imitator, and this characteristic shows itself in the way he dresses and in his general behaviour. To be considered a *Mundele andombe* (black whiteman) by his comrades is a mark of distinction of which he is proud. Even this is not altogether to the bad. This imitative passion enables him to talk his white man's language with wonderful ease. He often imitates the sound and gestures of the French and Portuguese even before he understands a word of their conversation, and he is really clever in picking up languages. This class of African is to be met with everywhere at the ports and other commercial centres, and he copies the white man's vices as easily as his virtues.

We had all this in mind when Kimpese was chosen for the location of the Training College. It was far away from any of the commercial centres and in touch with the work of the two missions. We never took them away from the simplicity of their native life. The buildings in which they lived were such as they would build for themselves in their villages, their food exactly the same, and from the beginning their family life was uninterrupted, for each man had his wife and children with him during his three years' course. In my opinion this system of family life at College has been the greatest asset of the school, and has contributed to its success more than anything

else. The responsibilities of the home life and the necessity for working in their farms to grow food for the children were fine correctives to the passion for imitating the white man. The whole atmosphere of the institutilon was native and yet elevating.

With all this in my mind, I could not help rejoicing in the development of the genuine Christian character of the students, and their endeavour to study for the sake of knowledge. They had acquired the habit of wanting to know the why and wherefore of the things they were taught, and showed a desire for treasuring up a store of knowledge and information for future work. At the request of the men, we set up a system of transferring all the points of the lectures into print, so that the students could take them away with them to their stations. In the absence of better literature in the native tongue, these "teachings" were highly valued.

During this session I made an interesting experiment with the third year men. Much has been said about the African's inability to do anything in mathematics, that the negro mind could never grasp a mathematical problem. It was true that I had not come across anyone in Cameroons or Congo who was proficient in arithmetic or geometry. But I do not think we missionaries ever took sufficient interest in this branch of learning ; we were too anxious to teach reading and writing, and leave our pupils there. However, I set apart two afternoons a week for the study of mathematics, and took the eight senior students for the experiment. We began with a little algebra and geometry, and later simple problems in trigonometry. One of the students had been my personal boy, and he helped me in my geographical work and was accustomed to the use of the tape-measure

and compass. He was a great help with the others. Very soon I found that they were keenly interested, for once a week we did field work with the prismatic compass. I had drilled them well in the solution of right-angled triangles, and we made this the basis of a survey of the country immediately around. Each one worked at a map of his own, and each day's work was checked and corrected from a map of mine which I worked out carefully with a theodolite. In six months' time I was quite convinced that given the same opportunity these men could easily hold their own with any white boy. They were very proud of their maps.

One afternoon towards the end of the term two Government surveyors paid us a visit. One was an Italian with a long term of Congo service to his credit, the other was a young Belgian. They had heard much about the Kimpese School, and being in the neighbourhood they were anxious to see our work. In showing them around the class-rooms I brought out the work of the students, and as they were surveyors I thought they would like to see the maps.

They were not prepared to see anything of this kind, and looked at each other in a very dubious manner. The chief turned to me and asked if it was really true that the black fellows had done this work. I assured them that such was the case, and further showed the visitor the notebooks, with the problems in right-angled triangles worked out. They wanted to see these men at once, but they had gone for their evening stroll. They accepted my invitation to come again on the following day, when the students would be at home. When they arrived next afternoon I had the class waiting for them, and suggested that they should test the students. They put three

problems on the blackboard, and I left them. In twenty minutes I returned, and the chief surveyor, greatly excited, jumped up to congratulate me, for four of them had already completed their sums correctly. He confessed that on the previous day he had not believed that any black men could do such work. So delighted was he that he made each student a handsome present and expressed his pleasure at their work. When I visited Boma a month or two later I discovered that our visitor had given a glowing report of our students, and I was warmly congratulated on all hands.

This brings me practically to the close of my work at Kimpese. My health had not been good, and I suffered from sleeplessness, which brought on other ailments. Then towards the close of the session I was incapacitated by horrible abscesses, and the doctors advised me to give up. It was a great disappointment to me, but I felt the wisdom of their advice. I required a thorough change, and decided to make the voyage home and await developments. The Railway Director at Matadi very kindly sent the ambulance coach to bring me to the coast, for I could not walk at the time, and Ross Phillips took me in charge at Matadi. Pugh of Yakusu was going home on the same ship, and his company was a great boon.

The voyage did me so much good that on my arrival in England I felt perfectly well, and was not without hope that even yet I might return to Congo.

Mrs. Moon found the College work more than she could manage single-handed, especially as she had a baby to look after as well; but the Trustees were singularly fortunate in persuading Dr. Catherine Mabie, of Mbanza Manteka, to join the teaching staff at Kimpese, thus solving the difficulty about women's

work. A special house had been built for her and was nearly ready before I left. Catherine Mabie has been a great acquisition to the faculty of the College, her natural talents and teaching gifts, coupled with her medical skill and experience, making her almost an ideal person for the position. She possesses grace and tact in a high degree, and she has been a tower of strength to the work. She is the niece of that Dr. Mabie who for years was the Secretary of the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, and she is proud to claim relationship to the Rev. John Aldis on the Steadman side of the family. Dr. Catherine Mabie is always a welcome visitor in London missionary circles.

The B.M.S. had at this time a candidate from Regent's Park College who was just the man they needed to take my place at Kimpese. Thomas Powell, B.A., B.D., had also the advantage of being a fellow countryman of mine, and I was happy in the thought that he accepted the position of B.M.S. tutor. He entered upon his duties with great zeal and enthusiasm, and soon became Principal of the College. In 1918, when he was in the zenith of his usefulness, the health of his wife broke down under the strain, and he was compelled to relinquish his work at Kimpese and take a home church; but he renders valuable service to the Society still, especially as Chairman of the Young People's Committee.

CHAPTER XXVI

A Fresh Start at Kibokolo

For two years I voyaged in a lonely barque, with sails sadly torn, drifting here and there at the mercy of wave and storm. It was the loneliness that preyed on my mind, for solitude was not agreeable to my nature. As on previous occasions, I settled down among my friends at Camden Road, and ultimately asked one of them to share my life.

The orthodox thing in a case like this is to say that I wanted to marry again for the sake of the work, and that the Congo Mission was my first and only love ; but I wanted Emily Bean for my own sake.

She had been an intimate friend of my late wife, and they had corresponded for years. She was full of zeal for missionary work, and well-informed about it. The old friendship grew stronger and more intimate, and love and marriage were the natural and happy outcome.

Her Sunday School work at Camden Road, and her services in connection with Goodinge Road Mission, made her a prominent worker in the church. When I consulted my pastor on the matter, by letter, he wrote of the lady in terms of highest praise, but went on to say that if I stole her away from Camden Road he would shoot me on sight. Later I repaired to consult my friend Mrs. Parkinson, who bluntly told me that I might as well look to the moon, or something to that effect. She was wrong, and before another twelve months were over Miss Bean

had become my wife, and we sailed together for Congo and settled at Kibokolo. The most remarkable thing about our marriage was the united chorus of approval from my friends, and especially the families of my former wives. I did not lose a friend, but gained many. When three years later we had to retire and settle down in North London, the nieces of my two previous marriages were in our home at every opportunity, and looked upon my wife with something akin to adoration—quite an unusual experience in second or third marriages.

The voyage out was robbed of some of its pleasure by the fact that the ship went straight from Antwerp to Congo without calling at any port *en route*. Reports of bubonic plague on the coast of Africa decided the authorities not to call at the French port of Dakar, and therefore we had not the usual complement of French passengers to call for at La Pallice.

I was delighted to find that Mr. and Mrs. Billington, of the American Mission, were fellow travellers on this ship, and the voyage was rich in fellowship and converse. Billington was one of the English party who served in the early days in the Livingstone Inland Mission. That noble quintet of names—Billington, Clarke, Harvey, Sims and Richards—together with their no less distinguished Swedish colleague, Fredrickson, were spared to labour in Congo for many years, and their aggregate number of years in the service must be very high. Joseph Clarke, indeed, is still "going strong."

I had not met Billington before, and these three weeks together enabled me to realise what a large and noble heart he had. This turned out to be his last voyage, and his was the joy of passing away direct from his work to his reward. He was greatly beloved

by all. Mrs. Hall was also returning to rejoin her husband at Palabala, and we had Miss Moss, who was engaged to be married to Thomas Powell of Kimpese. She was going to San Salvador for a year to gain experience of station work among women before taking up her duties at Kimpese as Mrs. Powell. She had been a teacher at home, and was therefore well equipped for the position awaiting her. She would have preferred staying at Kimpese, and beginning her work at once, but the rules of the Society are inexorable, and a missionary must pass his probationary period successfully before marriage is permitted. She was not averse, therefore, to the arrangement whereby my wife and I undertook to escort her overland to San Salvador, for it necessitated a stay of a week or more at Kimpese. All my belongings were there and had to be packed up ready for carriers from Kibokolo to fetch them.

The work of the College was in full swing. Powell was well through his first year and feeling his feet as tutor. Dr. Mabie was there also, in her new brick house, and she was an inspiration in herself, her ever-smiling face and the twinkle of her eye keeping us all in good humour. Mr. and Mrs. Moon were there, of course, and we had a happy time of reunion.

The journey to San Salvador was a new experience to the ladies, and at first they were a little bit tired of sleeping in native huts. But it is wonderful how quickly one can accommodate oneself to new conditions when nothing else is possible. A boisterous reception marked our arrival, and the two new ladies soon felt at home with the Grahams and Gambles and the unmarried ladies of the station. The Bowskills were in England. Mrs. Lewis was tremendously interested in all she saw, as her classes in Camden

Road and Goodinge had been supporting the work for years, and contributed towards the support of children to whom she was now personally introduced. We contrived to spend a Sunday with our friends, and then my wife and I proceeded on the long tramp of seven days to Kibokolo, following the route of my early pioneer journeys.

The Hoopers and Beales were there to welcome us, and the natives turned out in large numbers to join in the reception. The old bungalow which I had built years before, and occupied before going to Kimpese, was decorated with palms and flowers, with the motto " Tukayisi " over the festooned archway through which we passed into the house. We had reached " home " at last. It was a riotous welcome compared with the more civilised and decorous behaviour of our friends at Kimpese and San Salvador, but it gave great satisfaction, and at the bottom of my heart I have a genuine liking for real unsophisticated savages. Yet when my mind went back to my first reception in Zombo and the savagery exhibited then, I realised afresh the great change that had taken place in the people. Surely the Gospel message had at last taken vital hold of these poor folk.

I had been away from Kibokolo just five years, and it was very clear to me that under the wise and patient guidance of my old colleague, George Hooper, there had been solid work accomplished. There was a small church of Zombo Christians, who were developing into a hearty band of evangelists, and missionaries were being better received in the whole district. The school also was well attended. Mrs. Beale, formerly a missionary at Calabar, was an acquisition to our staff, and Kibokolo began to rival San Salvador in the

effectiveness of the women's work. Mrs. Hooper and Mrs. Beale devoted most of their time to this special branch, and the greatest change I noticed was among the women and girls. David Jones from Bangor College, a fellow countryman of my own, joined the staff soon after I went to Kimpese, and did good service in the boys' school. He had a fine grip of the language, and earned for himself a reputation for his powerful preaching in the vernacular. It was a loss to the work when, for family reasons, he had to relinquish missionary work on the Congo.

Those acquainted with African people and their native superstitions are familiar with the periodic appearance of a special prophet, at the head of a religious movement which for a short time carries away the population in hysterical and frenzied excitement. These outbreaks vary in form and aim. Some are manifestations of mysterious powers along the lines of the native religion, while other movements take on a semi-political demonstration against the powers that be. In most cases the power and influence of the "prophet" are transitory, and the excitement soon vanishes into thin air.

A year or two previous to my return to Kibokolo, Zombo experienced one of these minor "prophet" movements, which must not be confused with the much more serious outbreak in the Lower Congo in 1923. Some mysterious teacher came from the Kwangu district preaching "Everlasting Life" to the people. He claimed to have had a revelation from the Great Outside Spirit, Nzambi, and to have the gift of "never-ending life" to dispense to all who followed him. No doubt he was a man who had heard something of the teaching of the missionaries, and thought he might outdo them and his own

fetish men, and make a good thing out of it for himself. This "kitabula" teaching created a sensation through the land, and the men and women, particularly the latter, became wild with excitement. The Kibokolo folk, with the rest of the districts, went out to meet the prophet and eagerly paid their beads and fowls for the roughly-cut piece of wood in the form of a small toy-gun which was supposed to be the material and visible home of the spirit which gave life everlasting. His divine mission was not of a lasting character, and it was well for him that he had to move on quickly, for as the people died just the same, his roguery was exposed. Gradually the people returned to the Mission and to sanity, and were grateful for the medicine of the white man after all. Then the mention of the word "kitabula" brought a definite blush into the blackest faces among them.

To write of the station work and the itinerations into the regions beyond would only be a repetition of other chapters, and I refrain. After a year and a half the Hoopers went on furlough, and the Beales and ourselves held the fort for the remainder of our stay out. I had left England with strict instructions from our medical officer to remain in the tropics only two years, but as my wife never had a proper fever, and my health had never been better, I felt justified in carrying on an extra year. The climate of Zombo had restored my health in a wonderful way, and I was quite fit.

During the past year or two there had been much disaffection among the natives because of the heavy burden of taxes imposed by the Portuguese Government, and punitive expeditions were often resorted to. This resulted in the wholesale burning of towns,

and consequent unrest in every direction. The mischief was caused by the method of collecting taxes. If the Government had sent a responsible officer to do the work carefully, I do not think they would have much troubled, but the system of sending armed black soldiers with a native chief was altogether a bad one. The fact was that these emissaries of the Government collected for themselves many times over the taxes due, and when Zombo eats Zombo there is trouble. Also some inferior Portuguese officers, badly paid by their Government, were not above collecting for themselves, and the question of taxes became a really serious matter.

Makela had become the seat of government, and the chief officers had been stationed there instead of at San Salvador. The inferior officer at San Salvador had some years' service to his credit ; he knew the country well, and was looked upon by the people as a very hard man. One cannot say how much was true or false, but the people hated him and they could get no relief. Indeed, the young men went away to Belgian Congo, and even whole villages moved across the borders to escape the tyranny of the emissaries of the Government. Then the young bloods of the country, with little knowledge of the white man, began to threaten vengeance on this particular officer, and they banded together to resist the tax collectors, refusing to pay anything. Month after month passed and matters were steadily growing more serious.

A crisis was precipitated when this official attempted to recruit forced labour for the cocoa plantations in San Thomè. A trader from the coast had arrived for this purpose, and when demands were made for these recruits the whole country rose in rebellion.

Our missionaries, with Bowskill in charge, were at their wits' ends to know what to do. Unfortunately several of the malcontents had been trained in our Mission schools, but Buta, the leader, was educated in the Catholic Mission, and he was a clever man. He conceived the idea of gathering a force to attack San Salvador and capture the officer whom they so hated. In a few weeks he had thousands of men ready to fight, and the country for miles around gathered to his support, thinking in their own foolish way that they could do anything.

Bowskill tried to counsel reason, but they were out of hand. When he saw how serious things looked he dispatched a messenger to Kibokolo begging me to come to their help and to use my influence with these wild insurrectionists. The messenger arrived on Saturday evening, and by daylight on Sunday morning I had gathered seven or eight men to go. Never did I travel so lightly, depending largely on getting food (it was chiefly composed of ground nuts and plantain) on the road. There was no time for cooking, but with a kettle for making tea, I was content.

We tramped from daylight to sunset, and finished the journey in three days and a half. The weird feature of this trip was that no living soul travelled on the roads, and when we came to a village all was quiet as the grave. In most of the places they had seen the messenger going to fetch me, and they were all begging me to be quick and save the country. They were sleeping in the bush, as they always do in case of war. As we neared the San Salvador district there were many gun-traps laid across the paths, and we had to watch every inch of the ground. It was really exciting and laughable.

Coming out of a thick wooded place where we expected trouble, we sighted a lot of armed men who disappeared in a marvellous way on seeing us. We stopped and shouted out, announcing who we were, but they heard not. They did not know that I was expected, and mistook me for a Portuguese officer with soldiers from Makela. Then suddenly there was a blaze from their guns, and a rush, and to their horror they recognised me. They invited me to come and see their trenches, and to my astonishment they had adopted that form of warfare in the tall grass.

I called them together and talked very strongly to them about their foolishness, scornfully describing their trenches as graves they had dug for themselves. They went home to their villages after that, but I encountered several of these companies, placed at strategic points to block the Zombo road.

When I reached one of our sub-stations in the Tanda district I discovered that I was too late, and that Buta, with thousands of men, had attacked the Government houses at San Salvador two days earlier. The officers and soldiers, with the Catholic priests and Sisters, had barricaded themselves in the old fortress, and from there kept the insurgents at a distance with rifle fire. The poor deluded natives thought they had conquered the Portuguese. Our teacher at Tanda was very excited, and his sympathy was altogether with Buta. I immediately ordered him and his wife and children to go to Kibokolo, to be sure they were out of mischief. The district was full of insurgents, and I knew that he would be held responsible.

As we neared San Salvador next day about midday we could hear the firing of guns, and saw the Portuguese flag flying on the fortress at the other end of

the plateau. The grass around the town was full of people hiding from the bullets, so we made a detour and crept on until we reached the Mission Station. Their astonishment at seeing me was great. I could do nothing, for the mischief was done. Our chapel and brick buildings provided splendid shelter from the showers of bullets that were periodically fired into our ground, and our station was full of refugees, both Catholic and Protestant. Unfortunately at night, without the knowledge of the missionaries, the insurgents made their way into the chapel to sleep, and this complicated matters.

I stayed there nearly a fortnight. Bowskill expected his wife from England, and three days after my arrival he went away to Matadi to fetch her. I sent by him a letter to the Governor, who was expected on a tour through the district, and advised him of the situation.

Before Bowskill returned, I had news from Kibokolo to the effect that Buta had sent messengers to the chiefs there, pressing them to join the rising and attack Makela. This was very serious, and on the morning the Bowskills were due to reach the station, I started back, with half a dozen San Salvador men. In five days I came suddenly to our station, dismissing my San Salvador men on the outskirts of the town. Mr. and Mrs. Beale and my wife were sitting down to midday dinner. They had only heard from me in the note I had sent back by the Zombo men who had brought me down. I had been away nearly four weeks, and never in my life have I done such hard marching as on this occasion. Fortunately, however, the Kibokolo folk had no desire to join in an insurrection, having had their taste of it a few years before

Not long after I had left, the Portuguese sent a relief force to San Salvador, the insurgents were put to flight, and Buta was captured and sent to prison. The Mission was suspected, and Bowskill especially blamed for helping the natives. He was detained in the fortress for a week, and severely examined; but nothing was found against him, and on the arrival of the Governor he was set free.

The whole business, however, was a serious set-back to our work in Portuguese Congo.

CHAPTER XXVII

The Stones of Kibokolo

A visit to Makela to meet His Excellency the Governor, to plead for the release of Mantu, Nekaka and others imprisoned for their connection with the insurrection, brings my story down to August, 1914. The Governor had left Makela and had been only a few days at San Salvador on his return journey when the news of the outbreak of war in Europe had called him back to the coast without delay. Local troubles sank into insignificance in face of the world catastrophe, and everything else was forgotten in the frantic excitement of all interested in war news. The Resident at Makela was very good in sending us all the official *communiqués*, and we also had the benefit of the Lisbon papers, some of which contained fantastic accounts of battles never fought and Allied victories which never matured. So the weary months passed by, while news of reverses and catastrophes kept us in a despondent mood and we wondered whether the war would ever come to an end.

Mr. and Mrs. Beale and ourselves plodded on at the routine work of the station, satisfying ourselves with short itineraries into the nearest districts. After some delays in securing passages from England, we heard that the Hoopers would be coming in May, 1915, and my wife and I made preparations to travel down country with the men who would bring back Mr. and Mrs. Hooper. We left Kibokolo on the third anniversary of our arrival, and at the close of

what was destined to be my last term of service on the Congo.

My story of Kibokolo cannot, however, be cut off abruptly at this point, for most interesting developments took place soon after I left. Mr. and Mrs. Holmes from Mabaya joined the staff, and later on A. E. Guest, who had received special training in Portuguese at Lisbon. It was given to these brethren to witness among the Zombos the spiritual awakening which all of us had been praying for and had laboured strenuously to bring about. It soon became necessary to build a larger chapel to accommodate the increasing congregations, and the story of the carrying of the stones for this building will be told and retold among the Zombos for generations yet unborn. The admirable account of the opening ceremonies written by Mr. Pugh, the Field Secretary, in September, 1925, is so interesting that I quote his letter in full from *The Missionary Herald.*

"This building is a triumph of faith, perseverance and missionary skill. Designed by the Rev. E. Holmes, to him and to his colleague, the Rev. George Hooper, belongs the credit of having brought it to completion. More than seventy-five per cent. of the masonry, and all the cement work, was actually done by them with their own hands, with much of the wood-work also. As touching the timber used, it is worthy of record that the great mahogany trees from which it was obtained were originally fetish trees. In the far-off years they were planted on the graves of Zombo tribesmen to form a sacred grove for spirits to dwell in. How little those long-dead tree-planters thought that they were planting the roof of a House of the Living and only True God! 'He maketh even the ignorance of the heathen to praise Him.'

"Over forty thousand stones were used, and every one was quarried four miles from the site on which the Church stands. They were carried one by one, so that every stone involved a journey of eight miles. Many thousands were brought by the scholars of the Kibokolo School, and a common sight any time during the past year has been a procession of Christian and non-Christian Zombo women, each with a stone on her head, led by a teacher-evangelist blowing loud blasts on a bugle.

"But this building is more than a triumph of building construction : it is a triumph of generosity. The total cost is something under £500, and there has not been a penny of charge upon the Society's funds. One-tenth of the sum required came from native sources, the balance from friends at home. The Church was not only opened free of debt, but the Treasurer was able to report a small sum in hand on the Building Fund account !

"The foundation stones were laid a little over a year ago, and on the 18th of September last the Opening Services, which lasted four days, commenced. The actual Opening Ceremony was performed by His Excellency Captain Augusto Casimiro, M.C., the Governor of Portuguese Congo. An able administrator, a distinguished soldier, a well-known African traveller, His Excellency is also an author and poet of repute. Having unlocked the door, he declared the building dedicated to the service of God and open for worship, and about 700 of the rejoicing Zombo people followed him into the Church for the first gathering within its walls. With them were some fifty native representatives from other B.M.S. stations, also the Kibokolo staff and four visiting missionaries. At this service brief addresses were

given by the Revs. R. Lanyon Jennings (Thysville), A. A. Lambourne (San Salvador), and the present writer (B.M.S. Congo Secretary).

"The following day was 'Deacons' Day,' when visiting Deacons from San Salvador, Thysville, Kibentele, Wathen and Kinshasa presented the gifts from the Churches at those centres to that at Kibokolo, and delivered excellent addresses. One speaker said : 'You have a large and very beautiful building. Don't be content to boast about it on the market-places. You must not rest content till you have built a temple for God in the heart of every Zombo man and woman.'

"The third day, Sunday, was 'the great day of the feast.' A meeting for praise and prayer was held at an early hour, and was followed by a service, at which the attendance exceeded that of the opening day itself. Seats have been provided for 500 worshippers. Every one was occupied, and about 400 people were glad to avail themselves of sitting room—on the floor ! The first sermon in the new building was preached by the Rev. R. Lanyon Jennings. 'Lord, teach us to pray' ; 'When ye pray, forgive,' were the passages chosen for exposition. It was a memorable utterance, and echoes of it will be surely heard in many a Congo Prayer-House for a long time to come.

"This service was conducted partly in Portuguese and partly in the Ki-Kongo language. The famous Decree 77 enacts that all worship, and all instruction, shall be in the official language only. But this is not strictly observed ; it is not good, for example, that men should have to pray in a foreign tongue. Nevertheless, it was interesting to hear this great congregation singing Portuguese hymns, and to hear also the

reverent repetition of the Apostles' Creed, in which they were led by the Rev. A. E. Guest, also in that language.

"In the afternoon the men and women divided. A women's meeting in the old Church was addressed by Mrs. Pugh, to whom was given the privilege of speaking to some 200 women about things which are dear to every mother's heart, whatever her colour or nationality. At the same hour the new building was filled with men, to whom the present writer spoke on the subject: 'The Message of the Stones of Kibokolo.'

"The day following a Baptism was held, when 63 candidates were baptized in the stream which flows through a valley not far from the Mission Station. Later in the same day these were received into the Church at a Communion Service presided over by the Rev. A. A. Lambourne, of San Salvador. It is worthy of note that on this day the membership of the Church at Kibokolo increased by one-fourth.

"The Communion Service very fittingly brought to a close a series of meetings all of which were marked by great spiritual fervour. The address delivered by Mr. Lambourne was a heart-searching one. He spoke of 'Impossibilities in the Christian Life,' basing the address on the Apostle's words in 1 Cor. x. 21: 'Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.'

"This building is a triumph of witness. There it stands in the heart of Zomboland, an evidence of the power of the Gospel. It is the spiritual home of a people who during many years seemed wholly intractable and indifferent to the Message of Life.

It is an earnest of the coming triumph of Light over Darkness. The strength of the stones of the hills, the glory of the forest trees, have been brought to beautify the sanctuary. In it the promise of the Lord will be again fulfilled : 'I will make the place of My feet glorious.' "

So I leave the story of Kibokolo to those who are still labouring there, with an earnest prayer that God will abundantly bless their efforts for the uplift of one of the most interesting tribes bordering on Congoland. Seldom has a battle with heathenism been more fiercely fought than this in Zombo. We had all the forces of darkness arrayed against us, and the victory has been won. May the conquest of Kibokolo be the beginning of a new era in the land, the infant church grow pure and strong.

On reaching Tumba we discovered that the sailing of the Belgian steamer had been delayed for a week, and my wife and I took the opportunity to visit Kinshasa, where we spent a delightful time with our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Howell. Kinshasa is now in direct communication with Europe, as is also Brazzaville across the Pool, and we were in wireless touch with the world and received all the war news at first hand. Going into the post office one evening, we found the news just arrived that Italy had joined the Allies, and this within an hour of the decision of the Italian Parliament ; but the news of the havoc caused by German submarines, and the sinking of the *Lusitania*, among other items, were not reassuring for those on the point of sailing to danger zones.

It was a memorable voyage, and very trying to one's nerves. Sailing without lights, with the knowledge that all other vessels did likewise, was a weird

experience. Nobody was allowed to strike a match on deck at night lest our presence should be betrayed to an enemy ship. Every passenger became an amateur watchman during the day, and every speck or sail discovered on the horizon was either an *Emden* or a submarine. The daily life-boat drill, when everyone rushed to position like madmen with their life-belts generally tied upside down, only increased our nervousness, until the whole business bored us almost to death. During the last four days we were supposed to sleep, eat and live in our life-belts, and most of the passengers kept on deck the last night crossing the Channel, lest they should be drowned in their cabins.

At last, in pitch darkness, we crept along the English coast, and by the help of shore signals our ship was guided safely into Falmouth, where we landed the next morning. Some of the extra brave among the passengers, when inside the harbour, began to bemoan the fact that after all the life-belt drill on board ship we were allowed to land without once experiencing the excitement of a submarine attack. But on the whole we were more than satisfied to be on land again ; and Sunday evening saw us in London among our friends, and we were able to report ourselves at Camden Road just as they were coming out of the evening service.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Reflections

Reviewing the history of missionary work in the Congo country, what a transformation one finds after half a century of Christian teaching. It was a miracle of the Grace of God that the early missionaries were able to break down the opposition they encountered from unfriendly chiefs and furious witch-doctors. They succeeded only because of their passion for the salvation of the Africans, and their trust in God.

How many of us who knew the Congo forty years ago would have dared to expect such advance as the Christian Church has made during this short period of time? None. Yet the miracle has been wrought. Statistics are out of date before the printer's ink is dry, and they serve no useful purpose. But the five members at San Salvador and the converts at Mbanza Manteka have been multiplied by tens of thousands in ll parts of the Congo basin.

Yet the number of converts and the large churches gathered in are not a full estimate of the success of the missionary enterprise. It is not a matter of counting heads that matters, but the use the Christians make of their heads and hearts in service for their fellow men. Have the Christian communities which have gathered around the Missions any definite influence for good upon their heathen brethren? Do the heathen people live happier lives because there are Christians living among them? This is the genuine test of true conversion to God, and from this point of view the various missions on the Congo can be proud

of their record. When I want to measure the influence of a native church I invariably look to the heathen institutions that flourish in its neighbourhood. Have the example of the Christian members and their higher standard of morality influenced the heathen life and public opinion generally ?

There were three heathen institutions which dominated Congo in the early days—Slavery, Witchcraft and Polygamy. San Salvador had been the centre of the slave trade for generations. Nobody has accused the Portuguese Government of any extra zeal in the suppression of slavery, although I gladly and gratefully acknowledge that a few individual officers would have nothing to do with it. Yet to-day there is hardly a slave to be seen in the land. The Christians can have nothing to do with slavery, and this spirit of freedom and brotherhood within the Church has changed the attitude of the heathen people towards that institution. Freedom is in the blood of the whole community, and slavery cannot thrive in such a soil. The credit is to be given to the Spirit of Christ manifest in the native church.

The gradual disappearance of Witchcraft is accounted for in much the same way, and even the heathen to-day will not tolerate the witch-doctor and his gang.

Polygamy is not so easily uprooted, for the whole family and social structure is built upon it. We are wrong in looking upon polygamy as a system of unbridled sensuality. Where polygamy thrives, marriage is not a matter for the individual, but for the family, and the children of a polygamous union belong not to the parents, but to the mother's clan. Succession rights run from maternal uncle to nephew. Mother-right is the key to the polygamous family, while the

Christian conception makes the father the head of his family, so that we have two antagonistic principles. Slaves and children of slaves have no families, for they are inherited property. The Christian teaching insists on marriage being a union for life of one man and one woman, bond or free, on the basis of love, and with their children forming a new family relationship which is diametrically opposed to the practice of polygamy.

This accounts for the difficulty in fighting this evil, yet the change from polygamy to monogany is being rapidly accomplished. In the native church a new standard of morality has been set up, and the right over the children has been transferred from the mother's clan to the individual husband and father. This new basis to the family is becoming more popular among the heathen, too, because they see the advantages of it in the Christian communities. Christianity is verily the leaven which works in secret and must ultimately affect the whole.

The approach to this and kindred subjects by our early Congo missionaries was undoubtedly the right one. They were prepared to let their teaching manifest itself gradually in the lives of the individual members of the church, and make the church the centre of all their care and attention.

Whether we have been as wise and successful in other directions, I am not sure. I offer two criticisms to our work which apply more forcibly to myself perhaps than to my colleagues, and it is for this reason that I have headed this chapter " Reflections."

In the first place, we Europeans have allowed ourselves to build up too elaborate and costly institutions, and to concentrate too much on one centre. I especially think of large chapels and halls, and hospitals

with everything on the European plan. Now that communications between the stations are easier, I should like to see fewer Europeans on the staff living at the centre. It would be a great improvement if we could extend our staff much more, building smaller stations. We have had occasion more than once to move into a more central position because of the shifting population, and it has been a costly and difficult business to remove buildings. My objection, however, is not to the cost or the extra labour, but to the elaborate white-man institution. We are inclined to glorify the institution more than our mission. If I were to start afresh on my missionary career I should avoid a large church with the centre of gravity at the white man's station, and instead of a large church building I should erect a simple native structure in every village, and treat them as separate congregations, with the resident teacher as a native pastor. I should always keep in view what the natives themselves would do if the white missionaries left them. Certainly they would not build a large church in one centre, and I am sure they would never need the old mission station. Then why not develop our work in harmony with native ideas and needs? The action of our Wathen brethren in dividing the station into three was a fine thing, and I think the idea is sound and can be extended. For the same reason I should not have any machinery in connection with our workshops which a native, after leaving the mission station, could never possess.

We have been pushing forward our European ideas too freely, intent on keeping everything modern and up to date. But we do not want the African to be a copy of the white man. This argument applies with double force to our medical work. We must have

hospitals, doctors and nurses, and, unfortunately, this means considerable additions to the buildings of a Mission Station. Is it not possible to accommodate the patients in less elaborate buildings in native fashion? I fear that our real mission is sometimes hindered by the extra work of keeping large establishments going. It is a question of Station versus Mission. Large stations should be discouraged, although it may mean that we shall have less to show for our work.

My second criticism applies to the failure of all Missions on the Congo to put education on the basis of self-support. After fifty years there is no school where the parents pay for the education of their children, and I have as yet seen no effort in that direction. Our Christians should be taught to educate their children and to provide for them. While the principle of self-support in our evangelistic work has been acclaimed by all, yet there have been men who hotly contend that ordinary school work should be entirely at the expense of the Mission. I profoundly disagree with this, and would like to see all our village and station schools paying their way by a system of school fees. When I visited the Cameroons soon after the War, I found that most of the bush schools established by the Germans were still flourishing, the teachers being supported by the weekly pence paid by the scholars. The native Baptists, ever since the B.M.S. left the field forty years ago, have kept their schools open on the same plan. It was splendid to see the pride of the people in their own native institutions. It sets a value on education in the eyes of the people. The more they have to pay, the more they expect from it.

The day is coming when the more educated natives of Congo will be more ambitious for their children,

and will wish to send them to a higher class school to qualify for State appointments and commercial positions. Should the Missions provide such schools? Certainly, or else the future education of the country will pass into the hands of secular Government schools, or those of the Catholics. We should adopt the policy of the West Coast Missions at Sierra Leone, Accra, Lagos and Calabar, where there are properly equipped Boarding Schools for boys and girls, and the parents are glad to pay the full fees. The English Government offers grants to the people, and therefore all are up to Government standard and under supervision. The Hope-Waddell Institution at Calabar, with its six hundred pupils, is a model of what such schools should be. These large institutions were not built in a day, but are the outcome of the small village schools of the old days. Congo cannot be long without its system of Government education. Are the Missions prepared for such a change? Kinshasa would be a favourable position for an experiment in self-supporting schools. Why not try it?

The respective Governments will no doubt insist on the exclusive use of the official language in these schools, and our difficulty will be to secure a supply of teachers proficient in French or Portuguese. But in any case there must be a definite educational policy for the future.

The problems of Missions to-day are far more difficult of solution than those which the early missionaries had. One would not be far wrong in speaking of the past fifty years as experimental and preparatory. We are now reaching a stage when the work must be consolidated, and year by year the African native becomes far more important in the development of his own country, economically,

politically, and religiously. Shall the leaders of the future be men of high religious ideals, who will use their influence in behalf of peace and goodwill among blacks and whites in Africa, or men of the non-co-operation type, who will sow seeds of discord and hatred wherever they go, with "Africa for the African" as their battle-cry? The only safety I can see is to be found in securing a Christian education for the people, and the training of Christian leaders in all branches of industry.

CHAPTER XXIX

Nkand'a Nzambi—Book of God

The first attempts at Bible translation in Congo were in the way of exercises in the study of the language. Each missionary, with his special language-boy assistant, would translate simple passages of the Gospels for use in the Sunday services, or to provide reading material in school. Most of this never went beyond the manuscript stage, and now provides material for the amusement of the translators themselves. Another stage came when Ross Phillips printed the Book of Jonah which he had translated, and the Story of Elijah and Elisha, by Mrs. Lewis, both well used in school at San Salvador. Later on, in 1887, Cameron completed a translation of Mark's Gospel, and in 1889 Weeks brought out a translation of Matthew, and printed it himself at Old Underhill. These two little volumes served well in school and evangelistic work for some years.

During this time Holman Bentley was working laboriously, with his boy Nlemvo as his assistant, at his Dictionary and Grammar of the Kongo language, a monumental work by which he will be best known to coming generations. Having completed this task, he turned to the work of Bible translation, and in 1892, in response to the wishes of his brethren, brought out his translation of John's Gospel. This marked another advance in Biblical literature. In the midst of his other activities he continued his translation of the New Testament, and there

was great rejoicing when the whole was published in 1893.

It was the intention of Bentley to devote most of his time to translation work, and he soon began with the Books of Proverbs, Genesis and the Psalms. He had reached the neighbourhood of the Ninety-second Psalm when he received the Home Call, his loss being a staggering blow to the workers on the field. After his death it was clear that no one man could be found to proceed with this gigantic task, and it was decided to divide the Books of the Old Testament between six of the brethren, and make each responsible for the portion allotted to him. But as all had their station duties to attend to as well, the work took several years to complete.

It was also decided to publish the Old Testament in sections, so as to allow time for better work and careful revision. Psalms and Proverbs were soon published in a small volume. The second volume consisted of the Pentateuch to the Book of Ruth : the third, the Major Prophets : the fourth, Job and the Minor Prophets : and the fifth, the Historical Books. This last was published in 1916, thus completing the first translation of the Bible into Ki-Kongo.

This plan had the advantage and disadvantage of a variety of style, and even of difference in dialects. The unwritten language had no definite standard, and speech varied in each district. Some translators did their work at San Salvador, and others at Wathen, Zombo and Kimpese. Each man had his special style and idiosyncrasies, and these appeared in the translations. Our next step was to unify, as far as possible, the whole work, and get a certain amount of uniformity in the translation. Among us were two Congolese who had rendered valuable service as

pundits in the study of the language. Nekaka, at San Salvador, translated the Book of Ruth, and there we had the real native point of view. Nlemvo was Mr. Bentley's assistant in translation, and all Bentley's work bore his impress. So there were several distinct varieties of style in these five volumes of Old Testament Scriptures. We had, first of all, to decide which of these dialects should be adopted as the standard of our work. Without hesitation, the form used in the San Salvador district was followed, with one or two concessions in certain directions to Wathen and Zombo.

By this time there was a Literary and Editorial Committee on the field, and it was decided to appoint a Commission of seven brethren to undertake the revision of the whole work, and to bring all the books into agreement as to every word and idiom of importance. The brethren selected were G. R. R. Cameron, W. B. Frame, R. Glennie (Secretary), R. H. C. Graham, Thomas Lewis (Chairman), H. Ross Phillips and Walter Wooding.

Most of the work of this Commission was done in the Mission House in London, with constant reference by post to the members on the field, which somewhat retarded our progress. We had to decide on certain outstanding principles to start with, and also agree on the true native equivalents of certain words. It was soon discovered that a vast amount of Englishisms had crept into the translations, and we had to get rid of these. Such introductory phrases as " And it came to pass," etc., had been dragged in, and the English auxiliaries " shall " and " will " had been retained instead of the proper grammatical forms of the Kongo language. These were ruthlessly banished. The Kongo has the same idiom as the

Facing page 284

THE ENGLISH SECTION OF THE KONGO BIBLE REVISION COMMITTEE MEETING IN THE BAPTIST MISSION HOUSE.

REV. H. ROSS PHILLIPS. REV R GLENNIE. REV. T. LEWIS. REV. G. R. R. CAMERON. REV. W. B. FRAME.

Secretary. *Chairman.*

R. H. C. Graham and Walter Wooding absent.

Hebrew in sentences such as "Dying thou shalt die," but our translators had originally followed the English in introducing the word "surely" to confuse the meaning. In all these matters the revisers have gone back to the original, and if there are any Englishisms left it is not because of their lack of desire to delete them.

Discussions on words were common, and sometimes vigorous. Sharp differences of opinion among the revisers were the order of the day, and such cases were held over and debated until finally the finding of the majority was adopted. Perhaps the most hotly contested word was "holy." It was interesting to find out how other translators in Africa had dealt with it. Many had adopted the word sacred to the native religion, which is in essence—"taboo." There was a period in the progress of the work when we also accepted this expression, but it led us into greater difficulties. When it was required to translate the terms "clean" and "unclean" we found ourselves declaring that "clean" animals under the law were "taboo" or forbidden. We had to abandon that word when we found that it obliged us to call the Holy Scriptures "forbidden writings." We have finally adopted another word, signifying "setting apart," which is near enough to the original, but, in my opinion, not nearly good enough to express the idea of holiness in character, as in the admonition of Jehovah: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Such are some of the real difficulties of Bible translators, and not a few have been left over for future generations, when African Biblical scholars themselves will take the work in hand.

Everyone was agreed on keeping out all foreign words from the Word of God, and insisted on all

words being translated into the Kongo tongue. So, with the exception of proper names, and the words "Alleluia," "Hosanna" and "Amen," the Kongo Scriptures contain no foreign expressions. The words "bishop," "church," "angel," "baptism" and such-like, all appear in their nearest Kongo equivalent. "Testament" is translated by the Kongo word for "covenant," and the very name of the Book appears on the title page and on the back not as "The Bible," but as "Nkand'a Nzambi"—"The Book of God."

This great work has been accomplished by missionaries of a Society which has always placed the translation of the Word of God in the forefront of its policy. There never has been a period in the history of the Baptist Missionary Society, from the time of the great trio of Serampore until the present, when there have not been men wholly engaged in Bible translation work. India owes more to it in this direction than to all other missionary societies. In Africa, Saker gave the whole Bible in the Duala language of the Cameroons; and now the Kongo Bible has been added to the list of the Society's achievements. It has been published by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Bible is a Missionary that never fails. It goes hand in hand with education, and claims attention wherever it is read. It never tires, never dies. It cannot be recalled. People may talk of recalling men and women from their posts in distant mission stations, but once the Bible is given in the language of the people, there is no power upon earth that can impede its progress. There can be no retrenchment where "The Book of God" is concerned, and this Missionary can never be out of date.

These ten years of Bible revision work have given me a much higher conception of the truths of the Gospel than I ever had before. They have been to me a new revelation of the Grace of God and His love to men. As we studied together the words of the Book, I could not help feeling how poor and weak is human language, even at its best, to convey the unfathomable mind of God. The truths of the Bible so transcend the literal meaning that words either have to be dropped or clothed upon with a new interpretation from age to age. I can read an ordinary book with a dictionary at my elbow and be satisfied with its definitions; but when I read the Bible a dictionary does not satisfy me: I put it aside and pray for definitions of the Holy Spirit, Who clothes the words with a new meaning for me each morning. If I am satisfied with words, I find that "the letter killeth."

After my experience in Bible translation, I am certain of this: that the Truth of God is infinitely bigger than any human language can fully contain.

CHAPTER XXX

Final Words

The task imposed upon me is nearly done. I set out to write my personal experiences in Cameroons and Congo only as they bear on the rise and progress of missionary work. By right, my story should stop at the close of my service on the field. But my narrative will not be complete unless it includes some incidents which have befallen me since then.

First in order, I mention the fact that a month or two after my arrival in this country I was asked to accept the position of Welsh Representative of the Society. Mr. Fullerton (as he was then) wanted a whole-time man to take up the work of organisation in the Principality. He was looking out for a missionary of some experience who could speak in Welsh as well as in English. I agreed to act for a year, and then the appointment was renewed, and already it has continued for fourteen years. What exactly the office means, I do not know: whether I am Representative of Wales in the Mission House, or the Representative of the Mission House in Wales, is not of much interest or consequence. But I do know this, that there is much hard work attached to it, and that it gives me ample opportunity of knowing what a number of friends the B.M.S. has in Wales.

My new duties have given me the inestimable pleasure of working in conjunction with Dr. Fullerton for a number of years in the Home Office. He is

one of those men whose presence is an inspiration. He was considered to hold one of the most important offices in the denomination, but I have never seen the official in him. I found him a big brother with a heart large enough to make one forget that he is a Giant in Israel. I have ever found him a true friend and comrade.

The Welsh Office has also brought me into contact with his successor, Mr. Grey Griffith, and doubled my joy. "My lines have fallen in pleasant places," and I find it easy to feel young on my seventieth birthday because of the love and friendship of my friends.

Secondly, it fell to my lot in 1921 to pay a visit to Cameroons, the country of my first love. Nothing could have happened to give me greater joy than this. My missionary story began with the Cameroons, and now I return to the same spot to take leave of my readers.

The occupation of Duala by the Allies in the early stages of the Great War led to the expulsion of all German missionaries, and the Cameroons Christians were left as sheep without a shepherd. When the war came to an end, the missionary problem in all the conquered German Colonies came under careful review by the United Conference of Missions. As the B.M.S. had had a mission in the Cameroons years ago, there was a definite request that we should undertake this piece of work in what was Germany's premier colony. The Committee agreed to the proposals made, and this necessitated a preliminary Commission to proceed to the spot and inquire into the conditions prevailing among the native churches.

As an old Cameroons Missionary, well acquainted with the country and its people, I was asked to under-

take this mission, and the Rev. Louis C. Parkinson, M.A., a very old friend and son of the Mr. W. C. Parkinson often referred to in this story, was to be my colleague. My friend had had some experience in the Bahamas and had also visited Congo.

We sailed from Liverpool in the s.s. *Zaria* on the 22nd June, 1921, and returned to London in mid-September, having visited most of the Mission Stations in British Cameroons where the German missionaries had now laboured for close on forty years. An official report was presented to the Committee, and the recommendation to assume temporary responsibility for the Mission in British Cameroons was unanimously adopted. The enthusiasm was great, and to many present at that Committee Meeting it was like a return to the days of Alfred Saker.

On this wonderful journey we visited the Missions at Lagos, and spent a whole day at the Hope-Waddell Institute at Calabar, where the educational work carried on at the school fired our zeal and admiration. It is under the auspices of the Presbyterian Mission, but kept quite separate from the Mission at Duke Town, and is situated on a prominent hill nearly two miles away. We visited Duke Town another day, when I met several old familiar friends, and paid a visit to the graves of Mary Slessor and others in the cemetery close by. At Calabar, too, we got into touch with Dr. Thomas B. Adam and his charming wife, and spent two happy days with them on the return voyage. We had been introduced to Colonel Moorhouse, Lieutenant-Governor of Southern Nigeria, at Calabar, and he told us that he had just returned from British Cameroons and given all instructions for our reception and comfort. He also telephoned to Victoria, giving the time of our arrival next day.

In the morning the *Zaria* arrived at Victoria, and we saw the Cameroons Mountain just as I had done thirty-eight years before. I confess to being thrilled as the sight brought back to me the days long past. The anchorage was still two or three miles away from the bay, and I was delighted to see that the motor launch was going to land us at the old beach. When about half-way to the shore we noticed a native canoe with twenty-one paddlers coming towards us with great speed. We thought they were taking special messages to the steamer, but on approaching us they changed their course suddenly, and crossed astern of the launch and came up on the other side of us, holding their paddles upright in the air and shouting and yelling as only Africans can. Mr. Wilkinson, the company's agent, turned to me and said, "That is for you, Mr. Lewis." I looked, and recognised, sitting in a basket chair in the centre of the canoe, Joseph Burnley, the pastor of the Church at Victoria, who had been a young lad in my school long ago. He and the deacons, with some of the members of the church, informed of the Governor's message the previous day, had come to give us welcome. A quarter of an hour later Burnley and his people gave us another welcome on the beach, exactly on the spot where Alfred Saker landed with his little flock from Fernando Po eighty years before.

The Resident lived at Buea, high up in the mountains, and I was requested to come to the post office to speak to him on the telephone. Fancy a telephone in Victoria! He told me that the Naval Rest House was at our disposal as long as we wished to stay there. The Germans have erected fine buildings at Victoria, and we could not help being charmed with the broad

avenues and the gardens as we followed our guide to the "Rest House." I wondered what sort of place it would be. We were taken by the road past the post office, and the Baptist Chapel had a familiar look about it. On we walked, and then the officer passed through a small gate leading through a garden to a house which was no other than the "Brookmount" where I had lived after the death of Quintin Thomson. It was the Rest House! Parkinson and I occupied it for the three days we were at Victoria. While here, and when we visited Victoria later, we were the guests of Mr. Wilkinson, the head of a large Trading Establishment as well as agent of the Shipping Company. He was a Baptist himself, and in membership in a North Lancashire Church. He showed us no small kindness.

Another gentleman from the North, Mr. Evans, a Yorkshireman, was the Manager of all the Government Transport and Plantations in the British Cameroons. He did everything for us during the month we travelled in the country, putting at our disposal special trains, trollies on the mountain railways, and horses where there were no railways. One night we were his guests at Ekona, a beautiful place in the hills. From here we were taken by our host by mono-rail to the Mungo River, and there introduced to "Captain Moses," who was to take us up country two days' journey in his launch. Moses is a quaint negro character and a favourite of Mr. Evans. If he had been captain of an Atlantic liner he could not have been more on his dignity! His crew consisted of three men and an engineer, and all orders were given by the orthodox signals. He received us on board his craft with a salute, and waited until all the baggage was placed in position. Then he turned to

me with the inquiry, "Ready, Sa?" On my replying in the affirmative, he cried out in stentorian voice, "Le' go." The shore men let go the ropes and we were out in mid-stream in a few seconds. The captain blew the whistle three times, while one of the crew dipped the British flag at the stern, and off we went. All day the captain was glorious in his bearing and dignity.

Next day was Sunday, and we had crowded services at one of the old German Stations. In the afternoon I preached in "pidgin" English in the church, and I noticed Captain Moses and the crew present in the congregation. I talked about the old days, mentioning the missionaries, and referred to the German annexation of the country. I noticed Moses's excitement growing, and he jumped up and came to me at the close, wanting to know who I was. I told him my name. He grew more and more excited.

"You Sango Lewis! You Sango Lewis! Wha' for you done cut you beard? You memba' dem time Germans burn we town—dat beautifu' town of Massa Fuller at Bonaberi? Massa come in big boat to tote plenty woman an' children cross de river to Akwa Town."

It was really Silvey he was thinking of, but I did not contradict him. Then he continued: "Den you come back two time and fill boat wid Mission people. Yas, me Moses live in dat secon' boat. Dat is how you saved me an' plenty people from dem Germans." It was an exciting scene, and our captain had lost all his reserve and dignity.

Next morning we went to continue our journey, and found Moses standing in the boat with his hands up, saying, "Ah, Sango Lewis, long time pass you done save my life: now me Moses be cap'en of English

Government ship come to tote Massa an' him friend up dis river. T'ank God, t'ank God. Le' go."

One other incident, when we arrived in Duala. By the kindness of Mr. Allegret, of the Paris Mission, we were lodged in Saker's house and my old home. One morning a fine-looking man appeared on the veranda asking to see me. He was immaculately dressed, and approached making an elaborate continental bow to introduce himself in excellent English as "Thomas Lewis Mbala." I was wholly taken by surprise, but the last name gave me the clue. I remembered that soon after I left Cameroons, Mbala, one of my assistant teachers at Bethel, had twins born to him, and they were called Thomas Lewis and Samuel Silvey. This was Thomas, and he was anxious to see the man after whom he was named. I was, of course, delighted; he told me how he had been to Germany with his master, an officer in the army, and had been sent to school there for several years. Then he had worked his way in turn to Paris, London and New York, where he had attended some University, and had then returned to Cameroons. He was now a Professor at the French Government School in Duala. I inquired whether he was a Christian, and he said that he was a member of Bethel Baptist Church.

"What Christian work are you doing?" I asked.

"Oh," he replied, "I do my best as choirmaster, and teach them singing."

Then it was the turn of Mr. Parkinson and myself to exclaim. We had heard so much of this wonderful conductor of a champion African Choir of 250 voices, and several nights, in passing the chapel, Mr. Parkinson could not be torn away from listening to the choir practice. One evening afterwards we both went

to the practice, and " Thomas Lewis Mbala " entertained us with excellent singing for an hour. They knew the oratorios, and when a performance was given by this choir all the white people would be present, paying a high figure for seats. I am glad I have a namesake in Cameroons !

I was hoping to return in a few months' time to re-open the Mission. Plans were complete, and preparation for the voyage had begun, when my wife was taken dangerously ill, and had to enter hospital for a serious operation. Our departure had to be postponed in the hope that she would recover, as she did for a while. Then the trouble returned ; the surgeon told her the nature of the disease, and that he could do nothing more for her. Four months later, on 21st July, 1923, she triumphantly passed away. Once more, after eleven and a half years of supreme happiness, I was plunged into deep sorrow.

By this time the situation in Cameroons had undergone a change : the British Government had given permission to some of the old German missionaries to return, and since then they have been returning in larger numbers. So the frustration of our earlier plans proved an advantage.

My work at the Mission House was the greatest godsend to me ; we were still engaged on the revision of the Kongo Bible, and the work was very congenial. Cameron, Wooding and Glennie were my constant companions, the other members of the Revision Committee being out on the field. During the years I have been in the House, Robert Glennie and I have been like twin brothers. We never met on the field, for Glennie was an up-river man, and although he served one year at Matadi, we did not even meet there. He is a " walking encyclopædia "

of missionary facts, and a specialist in the Bible Translation and Literature branch of the Society's varied operations.

Finally I want to pay my tribute of thanks to those who have made my life at the Mission House such a happy one. I came from the foreign field, where for years I had grown to admire the Foreign Secretary, the Rev. C. E. Wilson, and his capacity for dealing with the problems which perplexed us as missionaries, and I felt quite at home with him. Dr. Moorshead at the Medical office was an old friend, and Miss Bowser entered the House about the same time as myself, to be associated with Miss Lockhart as Secretary for Women's work: and I also claim a friend in Mr. W. E. Cule, Editor-in-chief, whose duty and delight it is to help lame dogs over stiles. Of Dr. Thomas Horton I cannot speak without grateful thanks to God for his help and friendship when I was deepest in the Valley; he has been "the beloved physician" to many others besides myself.

There are also those friends of an inner circle, members of the "upper room" and lunch companions, who find much happiness in each other's company and who have given me of their best, to whom I owe a debt of thanks. Above all, in full view of my seventieth birthday, I thank God for His mercy and loving-kindness during these threescore years and ten.

THE END

INDEX

(Chiefly to Missionaries and Missionary Subjects).

Adam, Dr. Thomas B. and Mrs., 290.
Adams, A. G., 162.
Aldis, Rev. John, 256.
Allegret, Mr., 294.
Allen, Dr., 64, 75, 84.
Ambassa, 114.
Anderson, Herbert, 99.
Anderson, Mr., of Calabar, 194.
Annexation of Cameroons, 69.
Aubrey, Rev. Edwin, 12.

Banana, 66, 103.
Baptism, First B.M.S. at San Salvador, 120; Kibokolo, 230, 272.
Baptisms, 120, 230, 272.
Baroso, Padre, 118, 152.
Basel Mission, 85, 102.
Baynes, A. H., 24, 98.
Beale, F. and Mrs., 260, 262, 266, 268.
Bean, Miss (Mrs. Lewis), 257.
Beedham, Richard, 166.
Bell, Nurse, 250.
Bentley Memorial Hall, 249.
Bentley, W. Holman, D.D., 110, 125, 129, 168, 173, 209, 214, 227, 282.
Bible Translation, 282ff.
Biggs, John, 83.
Billington, A. and Mrs., 258.
Bohner, Mr., 85, 102.
Bowskill, J. S. and Mrs., 166, 209, 216, 218, 243, 264, 266.
Bowser, Miss M. E., 296.
Brew, Samuel, 52.
"Brookmount," 47, 67, 292.
Brown, Dr. Charles, 248.
Bruxellesville, s.s., 231, 236.
Buchner, Dr., 70, 74, 76, 77.
Building San Salvador Church, 160ff.
Burial of a Chief, 203.
Burial of Mrs. Lewis, 245.
Burning of Bell Town, 74.
,, ,, Hickory, 75.
,, ,, Kibokolo, 206.
Burnley, Joseph, 291.

Camden Road Church, 101, 107, 209, 245, 247, 257, 274.
Cameron, G. R. R., 131, 193, 209, 282, 284, 295.
Cameroons, 49–92, 288–295.
Candidate Committee, 20.
Carey, William, 3.
Casement, Sir Roger, 88.
Chapel Opening at San Salvador, 166.
Character of Black man, 251.
Child Welfare, 154.
Church buildings in Africa, 277.
Church, native, Cameroons, 90.
,, ,, San Salvador, 122, 150.
Clarence Bay, 43.
Claridge, G. C., 250.
Clark, J. A., 227.
Clark, Joseph, 258.
Comber, Miss C., 45, 80.
Comber, Percy, 82.
Comber, Thomas J. and Mrs., 23, 29, 30, 107, 124, 165.
Communion, the first at San Salvador, 121.
Conference at Kinshasa, 225.
Congo and Cameroons compared, 111.
Copper miners, 224.
Cowe, A., 119, 165.
Crudgington, H. E., 228.

Darling's Grave, 108.
Davies, Mr., of Pandy'r Capel, 98.

Davies, Rev. David, of Bwlchgwynt, 5.
Davies, Rev. Philip, B.A., 82.
Davies, Prof. T. Witton, D.D., 13, 16.
Davies, Rev. W. G., of Penarth, 11.
Deputation Work, 97.
Discovery of Congo, 114.
Dixon, Herbert, 45, 119, 157.

Education should be self-supporting, 279.
Exploring, 193, 219.

Fairley, Rev. and Mrs. (P.M.M.S.), 31, 43.
Fletcher, Miss Gertrude, 23, 55.
Forfeitt, Lawson, viii., 194, 197.
Frame, W. B., 249, 284.
Fraser, Dr. Donald, 223.
Fuller, J. Jackson, 58, 81, 84, 89, 100, 102.
Fullerton, W. Y., D.D., 288.
Funeral Custom, 203, 222.

Gabun Presbyterian Mission, 65.
Gamble, Dr. Mercier, 236, 244ff, 247, 259.
Glennie, Robert, viii, 284, 295.
Glover, Rev. R., D.D., 22.
Graham, R. H. C. and Mrs., 113, 121, 125, 127, 157, 159, 162, 166, 215, 229, 249, 259, 284.
Grandy, Lieut., 117, 168.
Grenfell, George, 23, 110, 124, 194, 196, 227.
Griffith, B. Grey, B.D., 289.
Griffiths, Caradoc, of Cardiff, 11.
Guest, A. E., 269.

Hartland, John S., 100, 119, 165.
Harvey, C. H., 226, 231, 238, 250.
Haverfordwest Baptist College, 9, 10, 11.
Hawker, Rev. George, 84, 101, 216, 228, 246, 247.
Hay, R. Wright, 72, 100.
Hemmens, H. L., 228.
Hewitt, Consul, 70.
Holmes, Edward and Mrs., 269.
Hooper, George and Mrs., 193, 209, 218, 222, 225, 229, 230, 260, 262, 268.
Hope-Waddell School, 280, 290.
Horton, Dr. Thomas, 296.
Housing, 158.
Howell, John and Mrs. 251, 273.

Jennings, R. L., 271.
Johnston, Sir Harry, 87, 228.
Jones, Rev. David, Kibokolo, 261.

Kibokolo, 169, 190, 257ff.
Kibokolo Church Story, 269ff.
Kimpese, 231ff, 238.
King Bell, 71, 73, 87.
King of Congo, 117, 133.
Kirkland, R. H., 217.
" Kitabula " Movement, 261ff.
Kivitidi, First Teacher San Salvador, 156.
Kongo Bible, 16, (See Nkand'a Nzambi, 282).

Laman, Rev. K. E. (S.M.S.), 231.
Lambourne, A. A., B.A., B.D., 271, 272.
Lau, Woman Deacon, 168.
Leal, Senhor, 210, 211, 214.
Lewis, Mrs. Gwen: Nurse, 216; Women's Worker, 150, 154, 167; Translator, 282.
Lewis, Thomas: As Architect, 161, 213; Astronomer, 194; Birthplace, 1; Builder, 164, 169; Chairman of Revision Committee, 284; College days, 12ff; College President, Kimpese, 231ff; Doctoring, 191; Exploring Zombo, 164, 165. 174ff, 183, 218; Home-coming in Wartime, 273; Last Term, 262, 269; Map-making, 253ff; Marries, 83, 100, 258; Meteorologist, 195; Peacemaker, 264; Photographer, 171; Returns to Cameroons, 291ff; Returns to Kimpese, 250; Returns to Kibokolo, 260; Royal Geographical Society, 195; Studies Plumbing, 248; Surveying, 254; Translator, 169; Valedicted, 17, 27, 98, 101; Welsh Representative, 288.

Loanda, 66.
Lockhart, Miss, 296.
London, First Visit, 18.
Lyall, Mrs., 83.

Mabaya, 222, 224, 230, 269.
Mabie, Dr. Catherine, 255, 259.
Maclaren, Dr. Alexander, 98.
Marriage, 83, 101, 152ff.
Mata, the Witchdoctor, 168, 174, 182, 183, 185, 186, 219.
Mayamba Bay, 110.
Maynard, John, 83, 108.
Mayo, A. and Mrs., 215.
Mbanza Manteka, 120.
Missionary Methods, 95.
Moolenaar, H. K., 92, 107, 111, 157.
Moorshead, Dr. R. F., 296.
Moon, Rev. Seymour E., 240, 249, 250, 255, 259.
Morgan, T. Hope, 226.
Moss, Miss (Mrs. Powell), 259.
Myers, Rev. John Brown, 16, 20, 248.

Nachtigal, Dr., 70, 74.
Nassau, Dr., 223.
Nazareth Chapel, Whitland, 27.
Ndembo, 199.
Necklace, The Golden, 143.
Nekaka, 284.
Nkand'a Nzambi, 282.
Nkimba, 112.
Nlemvo, 282.
Norman, Mr., 237.
Nubia, s.s., 64.

Painter, Miss (Mrs. Hooper), 218.
Parkinson, Louis C., M.A., 290, 294.
Parkinson, W. C., 38, 235, 248, 257.
Parry, John, 29, 93, 102.
Parry, Thomas, 30.
Patterson, Miss (Mrs. Claridge), 250.
Peacemaking, 211.
Percival, Mrs., 248.
Petterson, Mr. (S.M.S.), 92.
Phillips, H. Ross, 111, 121, 125, 127, 157, 159, 162, 215, 237, 255, 282, 284.
Phillips, Miss, 82, 83.
Phillips, Rev. Thomas, D.D., 27.
Pinnock, John, 72, 83, 84, 169, 190, 191, 193, 209, 217, 229.
Pitt, Miss, 108.
Polygamy, 150, 276.
Ponta da Lenha, 105.
Pontypool College, 13, 14.
Pontyvenny, 1.
Powell, Dr., 64.
Powell, Thomas, B.A., B.D., 256, 259.
Printing, San Salvador, 130.
Prophet Movement, 261.
Pugh, C. E., 255, 269.

Rebellion in Congo, 263ff.
Renkin, M., Colonial Minister, 243, 245.
Richard, Timothy, D.D., 11.
Richards, Henry, 226, 249.
Richards, Michael, 83.
Rogazinski, 69.
Ross, W., of Congo, 66.

Sacred Groves, 223.
St. Clears Grammar School, 9.
Saker, Alfred, 43, 51, 96, 98, 286, 291.
Saker, Miss Emily, 57, 81, 100.
San Salvador, 113, 144ff, 157ff, 215, 263ff, 268.
Schmidt, Mr. E., 71, 86, 87.
Scrivener, A. E., 89, 110.
Seed, Miss, 108.
Shindler's Grave, 108.
Shred, John, 57.
Silvey, Samuel, 23, 24, 75, 77, 81, 124.
Sims, Dr. A., 238.
Slave Trade, 105, 115ff, 151, 276.
Slessor, Mary, 92, 290.
Small, Dr. (A.B.F.M.S.), 109.
Spearing, Miss, 109.
Spencer, Miss (Mrs. Gamble), 236.
Stones of Kibokolo, 268.

Tanganyika, Bishop of, 243.
Tax Collecting in Zombo, 262.
Test of Conversion, 275.
Thomas, George, 249.

Thomas Lewis Mbala, 294.
Thomas, Miss Gwen, 67, 81, 83, 84, 100. (See also "Gwen Lewis").
Thomson, Quintin W., 23, 39, 44, 49, 50, 57, 60, 61.
Thys, Major, 104.
Translation into Kongo, 130.
Translation Work, 282.
Tsetse Fly, 198.
Tucker, Rev. Leonard, M.A., 97.

Victoria, 44, 45, 46, etc.
von Soden, Baron, 78, 83.

Wathen, Sir Charles, 118.
Weeks, John and Mrs., 89, 110, 113, 124, 131, 160, 282.
Welford, Mr. (P.M.M.S.), 82.
White, Harry, 157.
Wilkinson, W. F., 292.
Williams, Rev. John, 11.
Williams, Miss Winifred, M.A., 11.
Wilson, C. E., B.A., 296.
Witchcraft, 202, 276.
Wives, Missionaries', 129.
Wooding, Walter and Mrs., 215, 284, 295.

Zombo, 164, 169, 171, 183ff, 257ff.

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